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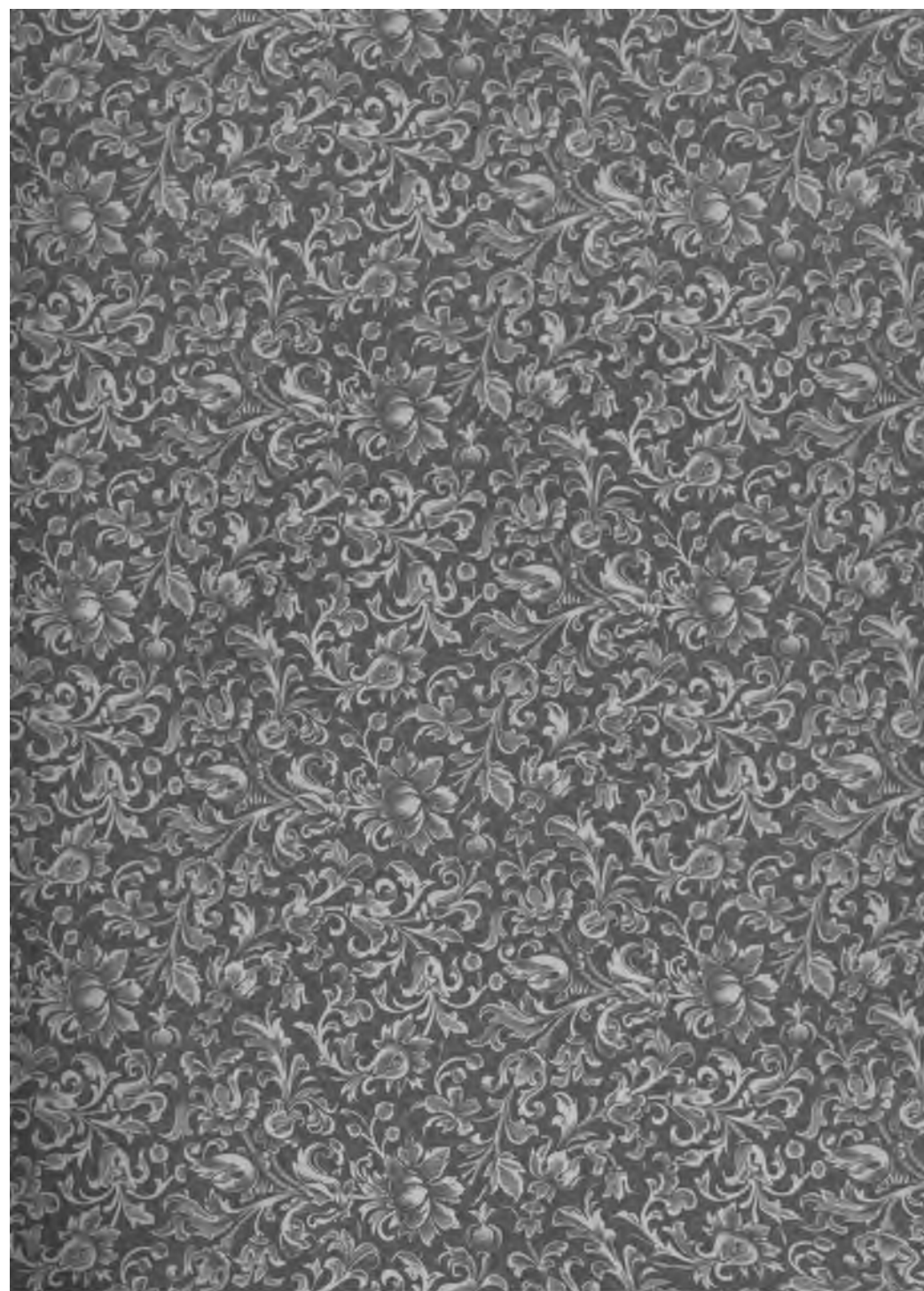
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*Mattie St. Baker.*

(First President of the Oread Club, and Chairman of the Committee in charge of the Compilation of the Johnson History.)

**HISTORY**  
**OF THE TOWN OF**  
**JOHNSON, VT.**  
**1784 - 1907.**

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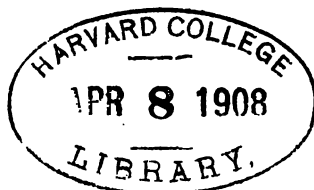
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Johnson Village is 460 feet above sea-level.

At the first census, taken in 1791, the inhabitants of the town numbered 93.

Population by decades :

1800.....	255
1810.....	494
1820.....	778
1830.....	1079
1840.....	1410
1850.....	1381
1860.....	1526
1870.....	1558
1880.....	1495
1890.....	1462
1900.....	1391



## CHAPTER 1.

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### HISTORY OF THE TOWN.

This township, containing 23,040 acres, was first granted to a man by the name of Joseph Brown, who was one of the first three settlers of the town of Jericho, some time previous to the year 1780. He caused the outlines to be surveyed, commenced the allotment in the eastern part of the town, and gave it the name of Brownington.

In the fall of 1780, while Mr. Brown was at his home in Jericho with his family, which consisted of his wife, two sons and a daughter, a party of Indians on their return to Canada after sacking the village of Royalton, came to Mr. Brown's clearing, burned his log cabin and barns, killed his cattle, and carried off the family as prisoners of war, this being in Revolutionary times. They suffered much from fatigue and hunger on their long, rough tramp to Canada, their principal food being raw bear's meat.

On arriving at St. John's, they were turned over to the British authorities, their captors receiving the bounty due them, \$8.00 per head. For more than three years they were kept there at hard labor, with scanty fare and great privations. They did not hear of the peace till some time after its establishment, so it was three years and eight months before they returned to the settlement.

During this time, the fees for the grant of the charter remained unpaid, and the Government officials not knowing of Brown's misfortunes, concluded he must be dead, so another grant of the township was made to Samuel William Johnson and his associates on Feb. 27, 1782. The charter of the town was not obtained till Jan. 2, 1792, when it was

issued by the Governor of Vermont, bearing the name of the grantee, Johnson. The name of Brownington stuck to the township till 1787, for in the "Diary of Jabez Fitch" under the head "Hydepark," in Miss Hemenway's "Gazetteer of Vermont," he speaks of this township always as Brownington, and of stopping here at McConnell's and Smith's, two of the early settlers, as he went back and forth from Hydepark to Cambridge, that year.

Fitch returned to Connecticut, and came back the next year, and then his diary makes mention of this town as Johnson.

Previous to the survey and allotment of the town by Johnson, in 1788 or '89, a number of settlements were made on the borders of the Lamoille river by emigrants from New Hampshire and perhaps other places. The first one was made in 1784, by Mr. Samuel Eaton of Piermont, N. H., whose name is recorded among the heroes of the Revolution, and he also served in the French and Indian war, during which he passed through this part of the country and down the Lamoille as a scout. At the commencement of the Revolution he enlisted in the American army under Col. Beedle, and frequently passed through this township while scouting between the Connecticut river and Lake Champlain. Several times he camped on the same flat which he afterwards occupied as a farm, it having impressed him as a favorable site for a home. It is the meadow of what has been known for many years as the Holmes farm, on the Waterville road.

He removed to this spot from the Connecticut river, with a large family, carrying his whole worldly possessions on a pack-horse. The distance was more than sixty miles, principally through an unbroken wilderness; and for more than thirty miles he was guided only by trees which he and his companions had previously blazed while on scouting parties in war-time, opening a path as he passed along.

Like all the earlier settlers, he was largely dependent upon hunting and fishing to support his family, until he could raise vegetables and

grain. English turnips were raised as soon as a bit of land could be cleared, even planted around stumps of trees. These turnips took the place of potatoes. Later, potatoes were raised, but they were scarce for a long time, partly from the lack of seed. Moose and other native animals ranged upon the hills and mountains and there were plenty of fish in the streams. Bread, however, was a rarity when obtained, having to be procured at a great distance, in flour or meal, and carried in sacks, upon the shoulders of the pioneers, to their families in their rude and lonely cabins.

Mr. Eaton lived to a good old age much respected, and in his later years received a pension from Government for Revolutionary services. He was buried in the cemetery near Eugene Grow's, in what was then the town of Sterling. In 1904 the town of Johnson voted to place a monument at his grave. It is a heavy block of Vermont granite on which is this inscription:

"Samuel Eaton  
1742-1826.  
Soldier of the Revolution,  
First Settler of the  
Town of Johnson, 1784.  
Erected by the Town of  
Johnson, 1904."

Two women of the third and fourth generation in direct descent from Mr. Eaton are still living in town, Mrs. Thomas Bettis, and Mrs. David Muzzy.

The year following Mr. Eaton's settlement here, a number of his old neighbors in New Hampshire followed him. Among them were two brothers named McConnell, one of whom located at the falls where the

present mill-dam is, and erected a saw-mill and grist-mill. Among these early settlers were the Millers, McDaniels, Mills, Simons, Smiths and Greggs. The first marriage in Johnson was John Simons to Sally Mills in 1791 or '92.

The first deed on record was given the 7th day of Feb. 1788, land being deeded by several of the original proprietors" to Jona. Edwards of New Haven, Conn., in Consideration of Ten Pounds Lawful money Rec'd To our Full satisfaction, and for Divour's other Causes."

The first child born in town was a son of Mr. Aaron Smith, and was named Johnson Smith, in honor of the town. The mother, when the child was but a few months old, in view of approaching winter and the scarcity of provisions, started with her child, accompanied by her husband, for Onion river, and thence, on foot and alone, traveled to Bennington to spend the winter with friends.

The first death in town was that of John Fullington, who was the first white man to settle in the town of Fletcher. It was in the autumn of 1785. He came from Deerfield, N. H., commenced clearing a farm, put up a shanty, worked one season, and, returning to Deerfield, started with his wife and four little children for their new home. They had one horse to ride, and one cow to drive, and only marked trees to guide them on their way. Two men by the name of Barnett who had land in Fairfax, came with them. Coming through Johnson they stopped for the night at the house of Thomas McConnell, who had a patch of turnips, and Mr. Fullington ate one raw; a severe attack of colic followed from which he died before morning. He was buried the next day in a trough dug out of a bass-wood log. The grave was a few rods northeast of where the Foote house now stands. A large rock near by marks the spot.

The widow and children went on to the desolate cabin home in Fletcher. She lived to be ninety-five years old, and died of small-pox.



The allotment of the town was made in 1788 or '89. The lots were designed to contain 300 acres to each proprietor, besides an allowance of five per cent. for roads. The survey, however, was very inaccurate, some lots containing a much larger number of acres than others, and zigzag lines were found to run from corner to corner of lots, enlarging one by diminishing another. All this caused much dispute and litigation among the early settlers, but in all cases the courts established the lines and corners where they could be proven to have been run and marked.

The settlers cleared the land, planted corn, and built log houses without doors or windows, hanging quilts at the door-ways. These houses were scantily furnished, as most of the settlers came from long distances, and, from lack of transportation, could bring but little with them.

One of those who came here previous to 1790 was a young man from Boston by the name of John Wier, who had previously been a sailor, but, strangely enough left that occupation to come to the wilds of Northern Vermont. He arrived in his short jacket and buff trousers, destitute of means even to procure an axe to commence labor in the forest, but selecting a location in the northern part of the town, he built a cabin, where he lived like a hermit until with industry and economy he had paid for his land, cleared and stocked his farm. In 1801 he sold it and set up a store in what afterward became the village, dealing principally in groceries. He also manufactured pot and pearl ashes, by which industry he gained considerable means. He was a man of limited education and depended upon memory rather than accounts in his mercantile transactions. Being strictly honest himself, he thought other people were the same, and thus much of his goods passed into the hands of those who either could not, or would not pay for them. His place of business was what was known later as the "old red store," which stood about where the hose house now stands.

After his death, which occurred sometime in the '30's, there was discovered among some rubbish, an old stocking well filled with silver coin and some forty dollars in bills, which appeared to have been wrapped in paper, of which the mice had made a comfortable nest.

He was buried in the cemetery on Stearns St., and this inscription was placed upon his tombstone:

"An honest man is the noblest work of God."

At the first census of the town, in 1791, the population was 93. The taxable property was valued at £275, equal to \$1,375.

From 1790 to 1800 more settlers arrived, mostly from New Hampshire and Massachusetts. From New Boston and Amherst, N. H., came the families of Balch, Wilson, Ellinwood, Reddington, Prime, Atwell and others. Mrs. Atwell came on horseback all the way, carrying with her a flax-wheel. She started with a mirror also, but that was unfortunately dropped on the way, and broken. They located on what has ever since been known as the Atwell farm, on the hill-road to Waterville, and when her horse waded what is now known as the Manning brook, she was the first white woman to cross it. Their first home was a log cabin, replaced later by a better structure, and the present brick house, built in 1828, was the fourth home which they erected.

For years they endured all sorts of privations and hardships, in common with the other settlers, but reared a large family of children in spite of them. It required the "three P's, Patience, Perseverance and Pluck," to be a pioneer woman in those days, and Mrs. Atwell once drove off with a pitchfork, in the absence of men-folks, a hungry bear who was disposed to make a meal of some precious little pigs.

Wild animals were, of course, very common, and even twenty years later were by no means rare. When Perkins Langdell, who came here a boy of seven, in 1818, was hoeing corn as a youth, he was near a log fence, and, hearing a noise, looked up to see a bear standing be-





DANIEL DODGE



MRS. DANIEL DODGE



MRS. HANNAH BALCH BAKER  
1770-1867



THOMAS BAKER  
1800-1863

hind the fence, his fore-paws resting on it, as if debating whether it were worth while to vault over and make a dinner of the boy.

The journey to this part of the country by team from southern New Hampshire, from Massachusetts and Connecticut, whence most of the settlers emigrated, was more of an undertaking than is a journey to Alaska now. Both people and household stuff usually came by sleds, the wear and tear on both loads and teams being less. They had to be out several nights on the way, for roads were poor and travel very slow. When Mr. Daniel Dodge moved here from New Boston, N. H., at one place where he and his wife spent the night, the house was burned and they suffered loss as well as the family, he losing his cap and pocketbook, and she her hood. Some good Samaritan woman furnished a hood for her to complete her journey in, but she inwardly felt that it was a poor substitute for the smart hood in which she had expected to appear in the new country where she was going.

From Belchertown and other places in Massachusetts and Connecticut came the Ferrys, Clarks, Wheelers and others. The first physician in town was Dr. William Coit. The first merchant was a man by the name of Crosby, who erected a small plank store. He had for sale a puncheon of potato whiskey highly colored with hemlock bark and burnt sugar, which he called French brandy, and asked a price accordingly. Some thirsty individuals secretly contrived to bore through the plank into the end of the puncheon and put in a faucet from the outside, which was hidden by a large log lying near the building, and there they took their nightly drinks at leisure. The trick was not discovered until the puncheon was nearly empty, when Mr. Crosby tried to move it, and found it fastened to the wall.

The population of the town in 1800 was 255.

Between 1800 and 1805 more settlers came from New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Connecticut and from other places in Vermont, including the families of Griswold, Burnham, Morgan, Ober, Perkins,

Patch, Waters and Nichols. The family of Arunah Waterman came here from Norwich, Conn., with an ox team, being seventeen days on the road. He was one of the original proprietors of the town of Hyde-park, but shortly after arriving there he purchased the farm in Johnson where Jonathan McConnell had located, and built the mills already referred to, about which the village has since grown up. His house stood near the site of the store built by O. & A. H. Buck on the north side of the Gihon, beside the bridge, now occupied by H. M. Maxfield, but was farther away from the Gihon. Mr. Waterman lived there till his death in 1838 in the 90th year of his age.

The first mail was carried through town by John Skeels of Peacham on horseback to St. Albans and back once a week. Arunah Waterman, Jr., was the first postmaster. The first settled minister was Elder Joel P. Hayford, a young Baptist, and he lived in the house near the north end of Pearl St. long owned by Roswell Bradley.

The earliest settlers located near the streams, clearing the meadows for farms. Later comers chose land on the hills in preference, for one reason, because they feared floods on the meadows, and did not realize that flooding enriched the land. But a more cogent reason was that it was found that the hill-lands raised better crops of wheat, sometimes as high as 36 bushels to the acre. There was no unlimited "Out West" to raise wheat for New England in those days, and it behooved the settlers to raise everything possible in the way of food.

The geographical center of the township as it was then bounded, was where Nathan Dodge lives. That part of the town was called the "Plot," in recognition of the plotting together of some of the original proprietors to have their lots measured off larger than was usual. The village was naturally enough called the "Flat." The men of substance in the north part of the town like the Dodges, Balches and others, thought that the commercial center of the town ought to coincide with the geographical, and tried to have a village built there. Alexander

Gregg built a store on the flat below the farm buildings so long owned by Benjamin Morgan, and now by Frank Dodge, and he traded there for several years. The cellar on the site of this store, where barrels of whiskey and New England rum were as common as those of molasses, is still plainly to be seen.

Later on, when cattle and horses became common enough so there were occasional strays, the town pound was established at this place, the man occupying the house being pound-keeper. All stray animals were driven there and kept till the rightful owner came and released them by paying the pound fee.

Another little settlement was started farther east. When John Cristy came to town from New Boston, N. H., in 1827, and bought the farm where he lived the rest of his life, there was a store, potash-factory, blacksmith shop and chair factory located on the farm. Joshua Chase was the blacksmith, Cutler Crosman, the merchant, and Matthew Griswold owned and managed the chair factory. The chair-posts, rails and rounds were turned by machinery, the bottoms were basket-weaving. Many of the chairs are still in existence.

With so many people settling on the hills, it was only natural that roads should be built over them, but hill-roads seemed to have no terrors for our forefathers. Up-hill and down-dale was all one to them. They appeared to take a bee-line, as nearly as possible, for the objective point, and if a steep hill stood in the way, over the hill went the road, all the same. Perhaps they forgot that the bail of a kettle is no longer when lying down around the edge, than when standing up over the center.

There are mossy side-hill pastures in some parts of the town, where can still be traced the old stage-roads which were laid out and traveled in those early days. Who were the dwellers along these roads?

In the northern part of the town, away in what we now call the back pastures, berry-pickers will come upon what was once a traveled highway leading to some hollow among the hills, where a cup-like de-



pression in the ground, with gnarled old apple trees around it, tells that here was once a home where human hopes and human loves flourished and were recognized. But perhaps no one of this generation can tell whose was this home of long ago.

"The homely hearth of honest mirth;  
The traces of their plough,  
The places of their worshipping  
Are all forgotten now."

Among the first saw-mills built was one 'on the Thomas Hooper farm, lately owned by James Parker. The raising of the frame for this mill was made memorable by a serious accident. A young man, twenty years of age, named Farr, who had been married only two or three days, fell from the top on to the rocks below, and was so seriously injured that his reasoning powers were entirely dethroned. From that time until his death, at ninety years of age, he remained perfectly helpless and speechless, his faithful and devoted wife supporting and caring for him all these years.

The farmers cleared the land as fast as possible, rolled the logs together and burned them, using the ashes for potash and pearlash, there being of course no market for lumber except for their own use. Even as late as the middle of the last century, acres and acres of land were cleared of their noble trees in the same spendthrift fashion, leaving land rocky and useless for tillage purposes, that, had the trees been left standing, would be a veritable gold mine now.

The first general article of commerce was potash, or salts of lye. There was a potash factory still standing, within the last half century, on the meadow directly back of Dr. Minott's house on Railroad St. Here ashes were brought and sold for nine pence per bushel, and made into potash and pearlash for the market. The factory was owned by Moses Morse, and its products were sold in Montreal.





THOMAS WATERMAN



MRS. ELEANOR DODGE WATERMAN



ASA WATERMAN



MRS. ANNA DODGE WATERMAN

Occasionally farmers burned hardwood in coal-pits, making charcoal to sell to the blacksmiths. Of all the trees in the forest, the maple was the most valuable to the early settlers. At a time when coal still lay hidden in the earth, its wood was the best fuel for their greedy fire places. They made sugar from maple sap in a crude fashion, cutting a gash in the tree with an axe, and inserting a thin chip which conducted the sap into some receptacle set on the ground underneath. They boiled the sap in large iron kettles, with a piece of salt pork hung on a hook just high enough to dip into the sap if it came near boiling over.

Those early-time people found it necessary to make their own lights. At first they dipped pieces of old cloth in grease or oil, such as they had, and burned it in an old saucer; this was called a "slutlight." The mills and factories requiring a more brilliant light used refuse fats, without trying out, in a shallow, iron kettle, placing quite a large piece of cloth in the center of the kettle, bringing together, and tying, near the top, for a wick. Whale-oil was burned in small tin lamps by those who could afford it on extra occasions.

Of course tallow for candles was rare in early days, for the settlers could not spare any of their few cattle to be killed. Eleanor Dodge, (afterwards Mrs. Thomas Waterman) who came here from New Boston, N. H., about 1800, to keep house for her brother, Elisha, before his marriage, used to tell of her first winter in town, when, by close economy she managed to get together enough tallow to run two candles in tin candle-moulds. Then Mrs. Atwell gave her three candles, and another good woman gave her two more, so she had seven, quite a good winter's stock. Nobody thought of such an extravagance as lighting a candle except in case of severe illness, or some great emergency. All meals were cooked at the big fire-place, supper was eaten and dishes washed by its cheerful light, and the family gathered around it for their evening's work, the women with sewing, knitting or spinning, while the men scraped axe-helves, tinkered farming tools, or tapped

their cowhide boots. The children lying on the floor where a hearth-rug would be now-a-days, spelled out their lessons for the next day in Webster's Elementary Spelling-book, or played "fox-and-geese" on a home-made board. There was corn to pop over the coals, and perhaps butternuts to crack, but the traditional pitcher of cider and dish of apples which would complete this picture of domestic comfort had to wait till the first settlers had set out apple-trees and waited for them to reach the bearing age.

The first manufacturing in town was purely domestic. Fields of flax with their dainty blue flowers became common, and in the fall it might have been seen cut and lying to rot the fiber in the sun and rain, then it was brought in and stored for winter's work. The wood-cut for February in Thompson's Farmer's Almanac was always that of a man swinging flax on a home-made break, a picture which the children of this twentieth century would not understand at all. Within doors the work of hetchelling, spinning and weaving the flax went busily on. They made all their underwear, bed and table linen and toweling. For handkerchiefs they would spin and weave a very fine piece of linen, then bleach it on the grass. They also made their thread.

If they wished for nicer cloth than any they could make, they bought it, often paying in barley, or other grain, as ready cash was scarce. It took sixty-four bushels of barley to buy a yard of broadcloth, and a bushel of wheat to purchase a yard of calico. They made linsey-woolsey cloth for dresses, the warp being linen and the filling wool. The colors were red, blue and copperas, woven in little checks. Sometimes they tied peas in a piece of linen, woven for dresses, dyeing the goods blue, making a pretty little ring, for a figure. The women and girls braided straw and palmleaf, and sewed hats, also made husk doormats. They made soft soap by leaching wood ashes and boiling the lye with grease. There was no saleratus to be bought, so they made pearlash for cooking purposes. Cob coals made the very best

pearlash, by soaking in water, then pouring off the water into bottles, ready for use.

While flax was one of the staple products, a large quantity of surplus seed was raised every year, and it was utilized by some one who established here a mill for grinding the seed and extracting the oil. This must have been quite a help to the farmers who raised the flax and thus had a market for their surplus seed. We find mention made of the oil-mill in the town records of 1813.

Farmers kept sheep as soon as circumstances would allow, both for their meat as food, and their wool as clothing. Spinning and weaving of wool were common household employments. The first carding had to be done by hand, but at an early day Joseph Waterman introduced a carding machine which was a great help. He afterwards sold it to Dow & Gloyd of the woolen factory, and in later years William McClerathan at East Johnson did the carding. All the yarn used in the family foot-wear was spun at home, afterwards knit into stockings, gloves, and mittens by the deft hands of the women and girls. They were obliged to make the cloth for all their warm wearing apparel. Yarn was spun, colored and woven for flannel dresses and other garments, also bed-blankets, flannel for sheets, blue and white coverlets and frocking. If a nice piece of dress goods was wanted the flannel was taken to the factory of Dow & Gloyd, and there pressed by machinery for a small sum. Cloth for men's trousers was taken there to be fulled.

Simeon Lyman seems to have started the woolen factory industry, aside from the wool-carding, as we find from the Land Records that in 1816 Joseph Waterman deeded to Simeon Lyman a "Privilege of Water at the lower falls on the North Branch of the River Lamoyille to be taken from the mill-dam or saw-mill flume sufficient to carry a Fulling mill, napping and shearing machine, and machinery for cutting dyewood, together with the buildings now erected for fulling and cloth-dressing."

About 1835 Andrew Dow and his brother-in-law, Gloyd, bought and enlarged the woolen factory, putting in spinning machines and looms as time went by. On the posters sent out, advertising the new firm and its business, it was announced that the factory was "built on the Gihon that runneth westward from Eden!" See Genesis, 2nd chapter, thirteenth verse. That was the way the Branch received its Scriptural name. Gloyd soon retired from the firm, and in 1838 Stephen Dow became a partner with his brother Andrew. Later Andrew Dow retired from the firm and removed to Hinesburgh, his place in the firm being taken by Isaac L. Pearl. Stephen Dow sold out, and Orange Buck became a partner with Pearl, they operating both the woolen-mill and the grist-mill. Willard Hadley was miller for them, and one of his characteristic sayings was that "the firm fed the hungry at one end of the mill-dam, and clothed the naked at the other"; When this partnership was ended, Mr. Buck taking the grist-mill, the woolen factory was operated by I. L. Pearl & Co., which firm has continued for nearly two score years.

Perkinsville, now called East Johnson, owes its location to the water power on the Gihon River, and received its name from a man named Thomas Perkins, who built and ran a foundry for several years on the site where Hayford Brothers now manufacture butter boxes and other wooden ware. He started the business in the '30's. Previous to that, Archibald Ferguson built a saw mill where W. H. Stearns' store-house is. These industries were the nucleus around which the village of Perkinsville was built, other mills being added from time to time. John Stearns started the manufacture of rakes there, more than fifty years ago. His son, W. H. Stearns, carries on the business in an enlarged form, putting out 50,000 rakes annually. John Stearns' younger brother, Otis W., commenced manufacturing butter tubs at Perkinsville, later removing the industry to the upper mill-site in Johnson village,



when the firm became widely known as O. W. Stearns & Son. Their sales extended to the far West. The "Son" has been Lieut.-Governor.

Thomas Perkins' foundry was burned, and he moved to southern Vermont and started another village in the town of Weathersfield, to which he also gave the name of Perkinsville. When the village in Johnson had a post-office granted to it, before the days of rural free delivery, the name was changed to East Johnson, to prevent confusion of mail-matter.

There were one or more distilleries in town where potato-whiskey was made, as early as 1813. Later on, Joseph Waterman began the manufacture of potato starch where E. E. Holmes' shop now stands, and did a large business for many years. Chas. Leland made starch for several years at the water power site between Johnson village and East Johnson.

Several industries have centered, at different times, about the upper mill-dam, where the tub factory buildings are now clustered. Simpson Bell had a tannery there in 1813. Later on, one Ryder made carriages there, and A. W. Caldwell, who built the Langdell house, also built a furniture shop near the aforesaid mill-dam. This shop was burned in December 1838. An elderly man tells of going to the fire in company with his father and brother, and how they stood in line with the men and helped pass pails of water. The end wall of the building fell out on the ice, and, boy-like, exploring among the ruins, each picked up and carried home two nails, as souvenirs of a great event in their young lives.

Such a commotion as it made in that pious household! Such a lecture on the sin of stealing as their good mother gave to those boys! The nails were taken from them, each two wrapped in a separate paper and marked "R's S's theft," and, "J's S's theft," and the boys were compelled to carry them to Mr. Caldwell and confess their sin.

Granted that nails in those days were all laboriously pounded out on an anvil by hand, and that they cost fifteen cents a pound, it still seems to us at the present day an aggravated case of what is known as the "New England Conscience."

Marshall Hosmer commenced chair making in 1839 in the L part of the Warren house on Railroad street, and he and his father worked at the business there for many years. There was a hat factory where Geo. Conger's house now stands, where Geo. Sheldon made "fashionable Hats, Brush and Plain Hats, Beaver, Otter, Neutre, Muskrat and Cony Naps, Satin Beaver and Wool Hats."

This was his advertisement in the Johnson newspaper of that day. Felt hats being unknown in those days, "stove-pipe" hats were the only headgear worn on formal occasions, and as boys even down to ten or twelve years of age wore hats of the same shape as their fathers, the hat-making industry was a busy one.

Tanning leather was a profitable business and a very necessary industry for the settlers. Any leather not needed for the home market found ready sale elsewhere. In addition to the tanneries already here, Dexter Whiting, who moved to Johnson from New Boston, N. H., in 1832, built one on the farm where Geo. Whiting lives, where for many years he carried on a very profitable business. The bark-mill was driven by the water-power of the tiny stream which flows near the road leading north from the village, the mill-pond being beside the road, just below the farm-buildings. The large wooden overshot wheel that ran the mill was still in place there as late as the '90's.

Ready-made boots and shoes were unknown, and itinerant cobblers went from house to house with their kit of tools, making foot-wear for the family. This was called "whipping the cat." Women went about in families as tailoresses, also, ready-made clothing not having been thought of.

Butter-making was carried on in a primitive fashion. The milk was set in big brown-earthen pans, and the cream was churned in a wooden dash-churn, often a tedious process. The butter was worked by hand, made into balls, and bartered for goods at the local store. Where several cows were kept, the farmers got into the way of packing their butter in tubs, and marketing it in the fall. Some men with stout teams loaded their sleds with butter, cheese, pork, dried apples, poultry, and general farm produce, as soon as sledding came in the early winter, drove to Boston, and marketed their stuff. They brought back supplies for their families, also freight for the merchants. Several teams would go back and forth in company, the trip each way occupying several days.

On one of these trips in the '30's, a severe snow storm set in, and though the teams were expected to reach home on Saturday night, the roads were so bad that they were only able to get to Hydepark, too late, and their horses too tired to go the five miles farther. So all put up at the tavern, and all but one came home with their loads on Sunday morning. Deacon Harris Whiting could not reconcile it with his conscience to drive his load home on the Sabbath, though anxious to be with his wife and little children. So he remained at the tavern, attended the two church services customary in those days, with Sunday school sandwiched between, very likely also a Sunday evening prayer meeting, and at daylight on Monday morning set out for home. In after years his widow used to relate this incident with pardonable pride.

As a whole, the early settlers of the town were a religious people. Church services were held at private houses, later at the schoolhouses, and Churches were organized as soon as the number of attendants would warrant. By the time there were two church edifices in town, in 1832, every Sunday morning long strings of teams could be seen coming from every direction to the house of God. A score of teams where now there is one, but this is partly due to the great number of farms that

have been abandoned to pasturage and woodland, so that there is not half the farming population that there was then. There were school districts fifty years ago where the little school-house was full to overflowing every winter with big girls and little girls, little boys and big boys. Some of the latter came to school professedly and really for the sole purpose of "putting out the master," and they sometimes did it, too. Many of those school-houses are today abandoned for lack of scholars. Few large families of children are found among the native Americans of today. In 1850, when the population of the town was 1,381, the number of children in town of school age was 488. In 1900, with a population of 1,391, there were only 286! These figures are their own commentary on the "race suicide" which President Roosevelt so wisely deplotes, and we can only conjecture how small will be the ratio of school children in another fifty years. At the same time, our schools are second to none in this section, and since the town system came into use, the town, as a whole, has been very liberal in furnishing up-to-date buildings, and employing teachers who advocate up-to-date methods. The graded school building was erected in 1895 at a cost of \$7,500. Alterations and repairs since, bring it up to nearly \$10,000.

Neighborhood prayer meetings were a feature of the early days of the town, and a great factor for good, in a time when regular church services were unattainable. At one of these a peculiar incident occurred. The log cabin in which the meeting was held was on the farm now occupied by Wm. Cunningham, and the site of the old cellar was plainly to be seen within the last half century.

Deacon Taylor and Deacon Clark, two good men whose memories are still fragrant in the town, were both at the meeting. Deacon Taylor, who was a very even-tempered man, arose and spoke upon the joys of a religious life, every day the same calm peace and hope. As he sat down, Deacon Clark, an impulsive man, jumped to his feet. "I like

that," he said, "I wish I could feel so, too, but I can't. Some days I'm so happy I'm clear up on the housetop," raising his arms above his head. "And maybe the very next day, without any cause whatever, I'm clear down cellar," bringing his weight down solidly. He was a large, heavy man, and happened to be standing on the trap-door to the cellar, which gave way at this juncture and made his words come literally true.

Of this same Deacon Clark, who lived where Leroy Scribner lately lived, and is buried on the same farm, it is told that one Sunday morning, just as people were beginning to gather for church, he drove into the village with his ox-cart piled high with bags of grain en route to the grist-mill. Seeing people in their best clothes going towards the church, he asked if there was a funeral.

"No, just the regular church services. What are *you* up to?"

"To-day isn't Sunday!"

"Of course it is."

"And I'm goin' to mill with all this grist, s'posed it was Saturday. Oh dear! I've got to hurry back home and tell wife and the girls, for they're up to their elbows in the Saturday bakin', and everything." And turning his team around with a great deal of "whoa! hish! haw Bright!" he made his shame-faced way home as fast as slow oxen could go, having to meet all his neighbors dressed in their Sunday best on their way to church.

Our village has been fortunate in never having any very extensive fires, especially as we have never had any organized fire protection until within the last twelve years.

Sometime in the thirties, a barn belonging to Mr. Samuel Merriam and standing near where Seth Hill now lives, was struck by lightning and burned. Mr. Merriam had led his horse out of the barn but a few minutes before.

Not far from that time, a small building by the Branch, just above the iron bridge, was burned. It had been used as a tailor's shop. The burning of Mr. Caldwell's first furniture shop has been mentioned elsewhere.

Mr. Merriam's store, on the site of B. S. Fullington's house was burned in the spring of 1849. It was only by the most strenuous exertions on the part of both men and women that the surrounding buildings were saved.

The largest and most spectacular fire the village ever witnessed was that of the woolen factory in the spring of 1871. The fire-bell rang continuously for an hour, calling in help for miles around, and only heroic efforts on the part of stalwart men, and the near proximity of the Branch, saved the Baptist Church and other buildings from immediate destruction. But for the fact that rain wet the roofs in the path of the storm of sparks and cinders, half of the village would have been in ashes, for a brisk east wind carried pieces of burning shingles away beyond the village's farthest limits.

One Sunday in the summer of '72, word came into the Congregational Church that W. H. Moulton's water-tubing factory, where Stearns' tubshop now is, was on fire. A young minister candidating there was in the midst of an eloquent sermon, but he joined the congregation in a grand stampede for the fire, to save what property they might from the flames and protect near-by buildings. The fire was a fierce one, but the minister was one of the foremost in fighting it, even getting his hair on fire once. But the church service was not resumed.

Two or more dry-houses near Stearns' tub-shop have been burned, but the flames have been kept from spreading to the main building.

The burning of the old mill-house one night in the summer of 1906, gave the Sterling Hose Company about their first opportunity to fight a real fire and they did it well. They had been called out to subdue incipient fires many times, but this fire had so much the start that

their efficiency in protecting surrounding property was amply demonstrated.

The village of Johnson was incorporated in 1894, the first meeting being held November 5 of that year. In 1900 the population was 587, but is probably considerably more than that now.

The electric light plant was built and is owned and operated by the village corporation, and it began running Jan. 15, 1895. The original cost was \$7,800.

The public water supply system was completed about November 1st of the same year. Its cost, including the building of the hose-house, cost of hose-cart and hose was about \$12,000.

The Johnson Public Library was started in 1895, with a nucleus of a few old books left from a former Circulating Library, and a small subscription raised among the citizens. To this was added what was called "\$100 worth of books," donated by the State in accordance with an act of the Legislature of 1894. From time to time gifts of books have been received from various sources, and the Oread Literary Club have had several entertainments to raise funds for purchasing books.

The town has each year at the March meeting, voted \$50 toward the support of the library, never more. It goes without saying that this amount would not pay for the services of a librarian, let alone buying more books. For the last seven years the Oread Literary Club have taken care of the library without expense to the town. It has now over a thousand volumes, but having no other available quarters than Corporation Hall, the great need is for a new library building.

It is to members of the Oread Literary Club that this Town History is due. With thanks to those who have assisted in its preparation by furnishing pictures, information, and so forth, we close this paper.

MATTIE WHITING BAKER,	}	Committee of Preparation.
CLARA RIDDLE FARRINGTON,		
ASENATH SAWYER HILL.		

## CHAPTER 2.

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### PAPERS PUBLISHED IN JOHNSON.

The Lamoille River Express was established at Johnson, June 1, 1838, J. W. Remington, publisher, Chas. G. Eastman, editor. Its motto was "Everything for the cause, nothing for men."

From a perusal of the first year's numbers we glean many facts regarding the town at that date, but nothing like as many as we should had it been conducted as a local paper is now. We sneer at the petty gossip of country journalism, its accounts of trivial happenings and unimportant incidents, but a hundred years hence such a paper will be a mirror of its day. Very seldom do we find a town item in these old papers, except under the head of "Marriages" and "Deaths," and are therefore surprised to read under date of May 26th, that "Oliver Allen treated his boarders to home-grown lettuce."

The paper is nearly half filled with advertisements, several firms in Burlington advertising groceries, patent medicines, New England rum, wines, whiskey, gin and brandy, as well as farming tools, salt, hardware, etc. Among the local advertisers are Samuel Merriam, goods, several tailors, among them S. N. Tracy, lawyers, Pike & Martin, and Salmon Wires, P. T. Sweet, stoves and hardware, Andrew and Stephen Dow, wool-carding and cloth-dressing, A. W. Caldwell, furniture, and in August Marshall Hosmer announces that he has "opened a chair-factory on Johnson Flat." That was the name of the village in those days, in contradistinction to the "Plot" in the north part of the town. Geo. L. Warner advertises the Johnson Book-store where are kept schoolbooks, Bibles and hymnbooks, all kinds of blank books and



blank forms, and a long list of patent medicines. For that matter, several varieties of patent medicines are advertised for sale at the newspaper office, a novel way of "combining instruction and amusement."

The reading matter is largely upon the political issues of the day and what was called "news" in those times, Congressional doings three weeks old. State, district and county politics are well aired, and there are numerous extracts from opposition journals, with Eastman's sarcastic and biting comments thereon. There is an occasional story of the sort that begin, "A maiden sat in her desolate chamber, despair was written upon her lofty brow," etc. There is often a short poem, sometimes one of Eastman's. "Ada" is a frequent contributor, and one of her poems begins,

"Oh! I've been to the West, to the far, far West."

We naturally think of the Pacific coast, but her concluding stanza tells us what the "far, far West" was then.

"Then adieu to Ohio, but give me my home  
Where the Green Mountain summits I see."

In March, 1839, in consequence of an arrangement entered into with the Democratic party of Orleans County who contemplated establishing a paper at Craftsbury, the name of the paper was changed to the "Vermont State Paper and Lamoille and Orleans Co. Democrat." It must be remembered that the Republican party of today is nearly synonymous with the Democratic of that time, and our Democrats, with the old time Whigs. The term "Republican Democrat" is used occasionally in the paper.

May 28th, 1839, Eastman makes announcement of a campaign paper, the Scorpion, which he was to publish soon. "Mud-slinging" in politics was not unknown then, and we can imagine what a stinging paper he issued.

## HISTORY OF THE TOWN

## "Smilie and Bank Reform.

Office of the State Paper, Johnson, May, 1839. It is proposed to issue from this office, commencing about the middle of June, twelve numbers of a sheet to be entirely devoted to the politics of the State, entitled,

## THE SCORPION.

'I wish you joy of the worm.'

The Scorpion is intended to accomodate democratic town committees and other individuals who may wish to circulate a cheap extra paper a few months before the annual election. It will contain all the political matter of the State Paper, and some original. Town committees, it is expected, will order to one address the number of copies they wish. Any individual can do the same, ordering one or more copies.

Gentlemen to whom this is sent are requested to use their influence to aid the undertaking. Especially do we invite all who are opposed to partial legislation, and the chartering of corporations irresponsible to the people, to give us their aid in the great contest into which the freemen of this state are preparing to enter for the overthrow of a state dynasty that has, for years, fattened upon the hearts' blood of the laboring classes. There never was a time when the democracy of the state could have higher and more sustaining hopes. 'Tis the Sun of Austerlitz! Forward! Let every nerve be strained, every muscle braced for the struggle. Young men! the staff of the Republic! gird on your armor! and as your fathers fought to be free from foreign tyranny so do you fight to be free from that great political blood-sucker, Partial Legislation. The tattoo has sounded! Form! To battle! Ho! To battle!"

The terms of subscription follow.

The State Paper passed into Wires & Co.'s hands, and was changed to the "Lamoille Banner." After three years it expired. In 1840 Joseph Poland started the "Lamoille Whig." After two years he changed the name to the "Lamoille Standard," and a year later sold out to W. B. Hyde who started a paper called the "Family Visitor," and issued 25 numbers when his paper came out under the name of the "Investigator." There were but six numbers of that issued when it was discontinued.

From No. 17 of the "Family Visitor," published in November, 1843, we make a few extracts.

There is a report of a County Temperance meeting at the Congregational meeting house in Johnson, Joseph Poland, President.

Prayer was offered by Rev. John Glead.





WINTER VIEW FROM THE EAST OF THE ACADEMY  
Pencilling by S. L. Wiswall, 1847. The Azariah Waterman house

Among the Resolutions offered was this, "That the clergymen of the different towns in the county be requested to deliver a temperance lecture, or see that it is done, in every school district within their field of labor."

The "Young Men's Lyceum" is announced to meet at the Academy.

Question for discussion,

Would the establishment of a tribunal for the settlement of international disputes be practicable?

DISPUTANTS.

Affirmative.	Negative.
C. E. Bowen	L. T. Flint
A. Hinds	W. B. Hyde
L. M. Knight	H. M. Safford

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Dissertation by L. T. Flint.

Declamation by G. W. Hawley.

Wm. C. Doane, Sec.

There is a call for a Lamoille Co. Liberty Convention at Hydepark. It says:

"Come not by twos and threes, but by scores and fifties—much to be done the coming year in the county for the slave—will depend on the numbers and action of the meeting at Hydepark. Come early, dinner and horse baiting with you, prepared to stay till the evening meeting adjourns. Don't forget to bring your wives, sisters and daughters with you. They are more efficient laborers than men.

In behalf of the Co. Committee,

A. W. CALDWELL."

### CHAPTER 3.

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#### REPRESENTATIVES FROM JOHNSON IN THE STATE LEGISLATURE.

Legislature met at Rutland 1784.

Legislature met at Bennington 1787.

Legislature met at Westminster 1788.

Legislature met at Bennington 1789.

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- .1789. Noah Smith of Bennington, Legislature at Bennington.
- 1790. Jonathan McConnell.
- 1791. Jonathan McConnell, Legislature at Bennington.
- 1794. John McConnell, Legislature at Rutland.
- 1795. John McConnell, Legislature at Rutland.
- 1796. John McConnell, Legislature at Rutland.
- 1797. John McConnell, Legislature at Windsor.
- 1798. Robert Balch, Legislature at Vergennes.
- 1799. John McConnell, Legislature at Windsor.
- 1800. William H. Larrabee, Legislature at Middlebury.
- 1801. William H. Larrabee, Legislature at Newbury.
- 1802. Samuel Eaton, Jr., Legislature at Burlington.
- 1803. Samuel Eaton, Jr., Legislature at Westminster.
- 1804. George Westgate, Legislature at Rutland.
- 1805. George Westgate, Legislature at Danville.
- 1806. George Westgate, Legislature at Middlebury.
- 1807. Araunah Waterman, Legislature at Woodstock.
- 1808. Araunah Waterman, Legislature at Montpelier.

- 1808-'11. Araunah Waterman.
- 1812-'13. David Boynton.
- 1814. No choice.
- 1815-'21. Daniel Dodge.
- 1822-'23. Thomas Waterman.
- 1824. Daniel Dodge.
- 1825. Thomas Waterman.
- 1826. Solomon Balch.
- 1827. David Boynton.
- 1828. Solomon Balch.
- 1829. Daniel Dodge.
- 1830-'31. Israel O. Andrews.
- 1832. Thomas Waterman.
- 1833-'35. Moses Morse.
- 1836-'37. Levi B. Vilas.
- 1838-'39. Albert Stone.
- 1840. John B. Downer.
- 1841. Asa Andrews.
- 1842-'47. No choice.
- 1848. Jonathan C. Dodge.
- 1849-'50. No choice.
- 1851-'52. Stoughton S. Pike.
- 1853. No choice.
- 1854. Whitman G. Ferrin.
- 1855-'56. David G. Perry.
- 1857-'58. Alexander Riddle.
- 1859. Samuel Merriam.
- 1860-'61. Samuel Morgan.
- 1862-'63. Asa Andrews.
- 1864-'65. Samuel Belding.
- 1866-'68. Robert Cristy.

- 1869. Isaac Manning.
- 1870. John Holmes. (Biennial Sessions established).
- 1872. Darius G. Holmes.
- 1874. Lucius H. Wheeler.
- 1876. Robert W. McFarland.
- 1878. Heman A. Waterman.
- 1880. Isaac A. Manning.
- 1882. J. A. Andrews.
- 1884. Sumner A. Andrews.
- 1886. Charles H. Stearns.
- 1888. I. L. Pearl.
- 1890. Sewell Newton.
- 1892. Norman A. Waterman.
- 1894. Orville H. Wilson.
- 1896. Enos H. Sherwin.
- 1898. Clarence A. Farrington.
- 1900. W. H. Stearns.
- 1902. J. A. Pearl.
- 1904. H. W. Maxfield.
- 1906. F. G. Bicknell.



## CHAPTER 4.

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### SOLDIERS OF 1861 FROM JOHNSON.

Adams, James H.	Field, Joel
Adams, Levi B.	Fletcher, Daniel P.
Atwell, Marshall B.	Fletcher, Harvey A.
Austin, B. J.	Fletcher, James
Babcock, Marshall B.	Fraizer, Edward
Backum, John C.	French, Charles
Balch, Charles W.	French, George Q.
Beard, Charles W.	French, James
Benton, Caleb Henry	French, Jason O.
Caldwell, Henry P.	Garvin, George W.
Clark, Jehial P.	Gokey, Charles
Clark, Jairus D.	Goosey, Alexander
Clark, Oscar	Goosey, Ambrose
Clark, Samuel	Goosey, David
Courser, George	Goosey, Joseph
Cross, Madison	Hall, William H.
Davis, Charles D.	Hunkins, Walter W.
Davis, Cyrus	Hawley, George W.
Davis, Timothy	Hawley, Homer
Dodge, Jacob H.	Heath, Henry L.
Dodge, Judson	Hinds, Plineas D.
Dubray, Frank	Hodge, Freeman E.
Farnum, Joseph	Hodge, Freeman O.
Farnum, Joseph, Jr.	Hodge, Lyman F.
Fellows, Daniel D.	Jacobs, Anthony

Jacobs, Franklin	Stone, John B.
Laraway, John	Stowell, George W.
Leland, Charles C.	Stratton, Hiram A.
Lilley, Carlos	Townsend, George R.
Magoon, Wilder	Turner, Charles
Manning, Harland F.	Williams, Charles W.
Mead, George D.	Wilson, Ebenezer
Mead, Royal	Woodward, Daniel
Medcaff, Wallace	Woodward, Oscar
Mills, Charles C.	Bradley, Roswell B.
Mills, John C.	Carter, Edward
Mudgett, George E.	Curtis, Henry
Muzzey, Frank	Goodwin, Horace
Muzzey, Joseph	Laraway, Gilbert
Parker, Albert O.	Osley, Joseph
Parrant, Peter	Parmelee, Lewis D.
Patch, Vernon	Stone, Edwin A.
Perkins, Edmund	Partlow, Joel H.
Perkins, Edwin	Patch, William
Perkins, Warren E.	Potter, Loyal A.
Raymore, Albinus F.	Stanley, Charles S.
Ritterbush, Alonzo M.	Townsend, Arthur
Robinson, Ansel H.	Webster, Jason C.
Robinson, Judson A.	Whitefield, George
Scott, Charles W.	Andrews, Sumner A.
Scott, Julian A.	Chesmore, David A.
Sheldon, Charles H.	Dodge, Nathan
Sheldon, George W.	Mudgett, Henry E.
Smith, Moses B.	Mudgett, John H.
Smith, Martin	Parsons, Henry C.
Steady, Augustus	Whiting, George W.

Laraway, Leander	Carter, Edward D.
Scott, Lucian	Davis, Philo F.
Eaton, Samuel	Gokey, Frank S.
Hill, Chester	Baker, William
Burnett, Abram	Johnson, Jason
Shiney, Joseph	Carpenter, Luther
Partlow, George W.	Crocker, Chancy
Burnham, Charles	Holmes, Darius G.
Prince, Daniel	

SOLDIERS IN THE SPANISH WAR.

Elton Holmes	Glenn Raymond
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## CHAPTER 5.

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### EARLY CHURCH HISTORY OF JOHNSON. BAPTIST CHURCH.

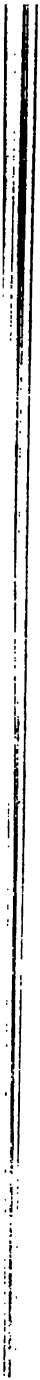
The early settlers of this town were mostly Christian people with different church preferences and we may suppose that services were held occasionally by itinerant ministers before there was any church organization.

The first to organize was the Baptist Church, which was established Nov. 7, 1808, in the Center school house, which stood at the east end of the Plot cemetery. There were fourteen charter members, among which we find the names of Atwell, Burnham, Clark, Davis, Ferry, Fletcher, Heath, Taylor and Wheeler. Elder Boynton was their first pastor. Judging by the records of the church, he had strong convictions and much keenness of perception—evidently a man of considerable strength of character. He built the house at the north end of Pearl St., where Roswell Bradley recently lived, as a residence. He closed his labors as pastor in 1821, but continued a member of the church and resided here until his death, except for a time when he became pastor of the church in Coit's Gore, now known as Waterville. His grave is in one of our cemeteries. Elder Perkins preached here a part of the time during those years. Thirteen years after the organization of the church, there were forty-eight members.

As to how the preachers were compensated, the records tell us that they "Voted to raise \$40; \$10 to be paid in money and \$30 in produce in the month of January." "Voted to pay \$50 in corn and beans and \$3 in money." In 1818, "Voted to raise a tax on the grand



VIEW FROM THE REAR OF THE ACADEMY  
From a pencilling by Dr. S. L. Wiswall in 1847. Old Baptist Church on the rear.



list." This plan was frequently adopted and seems to have worked well. It may not always have been strictly voluntary and when for any reason a brother felt his burden too great, the rest volunteered to help him.

The next minister was Elder Spaulding, who was engaged to preach one-half the time for \$125. In July, 1826, Rev. Joel P. Hayford began his pastorate and for about four years proved himself to be a faithful minister of the gospel. His health was feeble and he died in 1831. He was the first installed minister of the town, which gave him certain lands. He surrendered his claim to the selectmen, they to lease the same forever, the proceeds to be applied to the support of the gospel for all coming time. From this source, each church in Johnson receives annually the sum of \$21.25.

The first building for the Baptist Church was erected in 1833 on the hill where Carlos Oakes now lives. The present building was erected in 1855, the old one being taken down and the timbers used for the new. No mid-week prayer meeting was held, as the people lived so far away; but the people on the Plot gathered on Sunday mornings, at the school-house, for a sun-rise prayer meeting, then went home, did their necessary work, ate breakfast and went to church. These meetings were a great spiritual uplift and prepared them to enjoy the services of the day.

Elder Stone was pastor from 1831-1840. During this time, a great excitement arose about the Millerite doctrine, and the church was crowded night after night to listen to its teachings and many thought the end of the world near at hand. Elder Stone accepted this faith. After being dismissed from this church, he preached at Eden.

The next to come was Elder Clark in 1842. He also accepted the doctrine of William Miller. Great excitement prevailed and many were added to the church, who soon after withdrew and the pastor was

dismissed; but the body of the church stood firm, although the next pastor, Rev. R. A. Hodge, had much to do to discipline its members.

Father Hall, of Morristown, next preached from 1847 to 1849, and he was followed by Elder Cressy, who was a man of excellent character, but thought it very sinful for any one to laugh. His stay was short. His successor, Moses H. Bixby, was a strong man and his pastorate was one of marked success. The Sunday school was then very large with a branch school at East Johnson, numbering together 185 pupils. At this time, the church membership was 116.

The next to follow as pastors were Rev. T. M. Merriman, L. B. Steele, and H. D. Hodge. Then D. C. Bixby and Father Hall supplied for two years; next Jabez Ferris. Then Rev. B. F. Rattray filled the office for three years. At the close of his work, the church numbered 143. Then Rev. J. A. Pierce followed and his genial presence and strong, helpful sermons will long be remembered by those who knew him. Mr. T. Crudgington was then pastor for four years, and they were years of faithful toil and successful soul-winning. Mr. C. N. Saunders, to whose anniversary sermon, given Nov. 5, 1893, we are indebted for this church record, was a man much beloved by all who knew him. Mr. McLellan, Mr. Boynton, Mr. Leach and Mr. Hargrove followed Mr. Saunders and were all good men. Mr. Williams, the present pastor, came in 1906.

This church gave one pastor to the direct work of missions and five young men as ministers of the gospel. It has always contributed liberally for the support of the church and benevolences.

#### CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

The Congregational church was organized Sept. 20, 1817. The meeting was held in the hall of the hotel, then kept by Mr. Thomas Waterman, with ten charter members, seven by letter and three by profession. Dea. Samuel Waters, who died in 1878, was the last survivor







DEA. SAMUEL B. WATERS



SAMUEL MERRIAM



MRS. SAMUEL MERRIAM  
1802-1898

of the ten, he being a member of the church sixty-one years. Meetings were usually held in private houses until a schoolhouse was built in 1821 or 1822 on ground just in front of the Normal building, toward the building of which this church paid \$50 so that it might be made large enough to hold meetings in. This house, familiarly known as the "Old Red Schoolhouse," was moved away and on the grounds a second building was erected, chiefly by those identified with this church and society. Meetings were held here and in the Academy Hall until the first meetinghouse was built in 1832. This house, now known as the Opera Building, cost many a hard struggle, as the society was small. The pews were of plain wood, straightbacked and severe, the pulpit fastened high up on the wall, and a long flight of stairs led up to it from either side. The singers' gallery was over the entry and high up to the ceiling, the congregation rising and turning around to face the music. To those standing nearest it was a "choir invisible." No instrumental music helped out in those early days, and the chorister took the key from the tuning-fork and the choir chimed in. Later, Samuel Waters played the violin and Deacon Robinson the bass viol.

The first year, there was no way of warming this house and many called it "God's Icehouse," and could sing "From Greenland's Icy Mountains" with the spirit and the understanding. After this there were stoves put up near the doors, the pipes going the whole length of the church and then up into the chimney away above the preacher's head.

Town meetings had to be held here, and by 1851 the growing wants of both church and town demanded that each have a building of its own, so this was sold to the town and the present church edifice erected. All worked with a will for this new house. The ladies held a fair in the hall of the old hotel, with booths for fancy and useful articles, while an oyster supper was served in the rooms below. A ring cake was sold for 25c a slice, and Anna Whiting was the fortunate

young lady who found the ring. A fair was a new thing, and a large sum of money was raised and used to purchase the carpets, lamps, etc.

This church in its infancy depended upon itinerant missionary labor, and occasionally a neighboring pastor would supply. In 1824, Mr. Rockwell, pastor of the church at Morrisville, preached here half the time for four years, when he was dismissed at Morrisville and spent a short time in Johnson. He was a good man and loved his Master's work.

The first Sunday School work was done during his ministry and then only in the summer and fall months. In 1831, Rev. Lyman Cass was stationed here by the missionary society, preaching a part of the time in Waterville for one year. Next came Mr. Baxter in 1832. During this year there was what was known as "The Great Revival."

The church became interested in the Tract Society and in the monthly concert of prayer for missions. One good man, living three miles from the village, gave \$100 to make himself a life member of the Tract and Bible Society. His six sturdy children were all dressed in homespun and often carried their best shoes (also home made) in their hands as they walked to church, while his wife wore the same wadded and quilted plaid cloak year after year. No one was worried about the style in those days.

The first pastor to be installed was John Scott in 1835. His ministry continued about four years. Daniel Warren was next pastor for three years. Rev. Mr. Day, an evangelist, assisted him in a four days' meeting which resulted in a general revival throughout the town, continuing for some time, and many were added to the church. In 1841, Ezra Jones came. June 4th, of this year, we find recorded, "The church desiring to guard itself against Sabbath desecration, passed the following resolutions, Resolved: That the church regard traveling on the Sabbath, in ordinary cases, as a violation of God's word and justly subjects the offender to the discipline of the church."

February 1849, Rev. Artimus Dean was installed pastor. His ministry of two years was very successful with the young people. Prayer meetings were interesting and well attended.

The present house of worship was dedicated Nov. 12, 1851, and the same day James Dougherty was installed pastor, and his ministry continued for sixteen years, the longest in the history of the church. This church shared in the awakening when John Peacock, an evangelist, came to the Baptist church. As a result of this quickening, eighteen were added to this church. Father Dougherty continued to live here until his death, and his body lies in the old cemetery beside those of his wife and daughters.

Following Mr. Dougherty came M. B. Page, Fred Oxnard, Mr. Ward and Mr. Rivers, each of short time. In 1871, Rev. G. H. French began his ministry which continued for six years. He was a man of exemplary piety, desirous of seeing the work of the Lord prosper.

This church shared in the revival when Mr. DeWitt was here in 1872; also in 1875 when the Gospel Workers came among us. The Rev. C. H. Huntington supplied for one year. In April, 1878, Rev. A. A. Smith began his pastorate which lasted for thirteen years. His work was deep and lasting and his memory is sacred to all who knew him. Mr. Walbridge had been pastor of the church three months when suddenly called away by death. E. G. French, whose pastorate closed Jan. 1, 1905, had been with us nine and a half years, during which time over sixty were added to its numbers. J. K. Fuller, the present pastor, began his labors in 1905.

#### NAMES OF DEACONS.

Thomas Hooper,  
Horace Day,  
Harris Whiting,

Joshua Cook,  
Samuel Waters,  
Joseph Poland,

David Wood,  
Almon Morris,  
Dexter Whiting,  
S. H. Pearl, in 1870,  
James Holmes, in 1878,  
Barnum Austin,

H. W. Robinson,  
L. D. Parmalee,  
Fletcher Jones, in 1872,  
Joel Allen,  
C. P. Jones.

#### M. E. CHURCH.

The earliest historical records of the Johnson Methodist church are not now obtainable. It is known that the town was once a part of a large circuit extending from Stowe to Canada line, known as "Stowe circuit" and forming a part of Troy Conference. Among the itinerants who traversed this circuit, preaching and founding churches, the noted names of Lorenzo Dow and Wilbur Fisk are found. Occasionally one of these circuit-riders would visit Johnson and hold a religious service in some school-house or private dwelling. A little previous to 1835, Rev. Charles Lovejoy held revival services here in a school house and organized what was probably the first Methodist class, composed largely of young people, among whom were Charles and Lucinda Dodge; the latter remaining a member of this church until her death in 1900.

As the Stowe circuit became divided into smaller ones, Johnson remained one of several towns to share the labors of a single pastor. Once in three months the churches forming the circuit met together for a "Quarterly meeting." When this meeting was held in Johnson, the Baptist society sometimes gave permission to hold the service in their church on the hill. One such meeting was held in the store at East Johnson in the summer it was built, and before the frame was fully boarded. Other meetings were held at the same place, a little later. Among the preachers who served the churches previous to 1850 the names of Hannibal Smith, Harvey Smith and E. B. Haff are recalled. Sunday services were not held more frequently than once in

four weeks, and then often at five o'clock in the afternoon or in the evening. During the years 1852 and 1853, the most frequent place of meeting was in an old school house in School District No. 1, though some meetings were held in the town hall and in the village school house which then stood near Joseph Doane's residence. During the summers of these years a Sunday School was maintained. In the spring of 1854 the Rev. Wm. Clark was sent by the Troy Conference to preach at Johnson, Eden and North Hyde Park. He was the first pastor with a family who chose to reside here. As there was neither church nor parsonage he found little to encourage him, but he found a home for himself and family outside of the village. During the summer he preached in the vestry of the Congregational church every Sunday at five o'clock p. m. The remainder of the year he preached in school houses. He drew a plan for a church edifice, and devoted much of his time to raising money by subscription to build it. The subscription list, which has been preserved, bears the names of many well known men not identified with the church. Among these are, Samuel Morgan, Thomas Waterman, L. Reed, Stephen Dow, Benjamin Atwell, Avery Ladd, John Meigs, S. S. Flagg, A. Riddle, D. S. Waterman, Jason Hunt, Simeon Hunt, George S. Mills, Sylvester Rand, William Boyes and others.

Some Methodists in the east part of the town favored locating the new church at Perkinsville, but the Presiding Elder, Rev. John Frazier, advised "Build it just where a pedler would stop his cart to sell goods." His counsel was followed, and in December 1854 a part of Joseph Waterman's garden was purchased as a site. John Woodruff, Jacob Hayford and David Oakes were chosen as a building committee, but because of failing health the former resigned before the work was begun. Samuel Morgan, then a merchant in the village, built the church by contract. It was dedicated November 8, 1855, by the Presiding Elder, Christopher R. Morris.

# Order of Exercises

AT THE

## DEDICATION OF THE M. E. CHURCH,

IN JOHNSON, NOV. 8, 1855.

L. S. RUST, CONDUCTOR OF CHOIR.

1.—CHANT: Ps. 122. "I was glad when they said unto me," &c.

2.—INVOCATION, and reading the Scriptures.

3.—SINGING Anthem.

4.—PRAYER.

5.—SINGING Hymn 964.

6.—SERMON.

7.—

CHANT.

- 1 { LORD GOD of Israel, there is no God like thee,  
In heaven above, or on | earth be- | neath;
- 2 { Who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants,  
That walk be- | fore thee..with | all their | heart.
- 3 { Who has kept with thy servant David,  
| That..thou didst | promise him:
- 4 { Thou spakest also with thy mouth,  
And hast fulfilled it with thine own | hand..as it | is this | day.
- 5 { But will God indeed | dwell..on the | earth?  
Behold, the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee,
- 6 { How much less this | house that | we have | builded!
- 7 { Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servants,  
And to their supplication, O | Lord our | God;
- 8 { Harken unto the cry and to the prayer,  
Which thy servant prayeth be- | fore thee | this — | day.
- 9 { That thine eyes may be opened toward this house | night  
and | day,
- 10 { Even toward the place of which thou hast said,  
| "My name | shall be | there."







MRS. SAMUEL BELDING  
Living in Schenectady, N. Y., at the  
age of 92



SAMUEL BELDING  
1807-1887



JOHN MEIGS, M. D.  
1806-1862



MOSES MORSE

- 11 { Hearken thou to the supplication of thy servants,  
And of thy people Israel,  
Which they shall | make in..this | place.
- 12 { Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place,  
And | when thou | hearest, for- | give.

## 8.—DEDICATORY PRAYER.

## 9.—CHANT AND ANTHEM.

- 13 { Now therefore arise, O Lord God, into thy resting place,  
Thou, and the | ark of thy | strength;
- 14 { Let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation,  
And let they | saints re- | joice in | goodness.

## 10.—BENEDICTION.

The pastor of the church at that time was W. O. Tower who lived at Hyde Park. Joel W. Eaton was sent by the Presiding Elder to live in Johnson and to preach in the new church every Sunday. Previous to the dedication the first choir was organized with Thomas Stanley as leader.

Prominent men in the church at that time, whose names have not already been mentioned, were Emerson Miller who had been for many years a class leader, Barney Griswold, Eliphalet Hunt, William Parker and others. Soon after, the church was greatly strengthened by the coming of Samuel Belding and family from Eden. For about thirty years Mr. Belding was both steward and class leader, and the helpfulness of himself and family in church music and Sunday School is gratefully remembered. Since the dedication of the church in 1855, regular Sunday preaching services and Sunday School have been maintained, though with the exception of fifteen years the pastor's labors have been shared with one or more other towns.

The Sunday School Superintendents serving for the longest periods of time were Samuel Belding, M. O. Heath, F. A. Leland and G. E. Monteith. For several years past M. G. Grady has held that office.

Among the hearty and generous supporters of the church, who years since finished their labors, the names of M. O. Heath, O. M. Fitch, D. B. Webster, P. W. J. Peck and David Oakes are memorable.

The lack of a parsonage was long a great embarrassment to the society, but in the year 1888 Miss Lucinda Dodge deeded her house for this purpose, reserving the use of it during her life-time. This property came into the possession of the church in the year 1900 and extensive repairs with additions have since been made.

Since April 1884 this church and the one at Waterville have been united in one pastorate. The present pastor is the Rev. C. D. Pierce.



ACADEMY BUILT 1830.

## CHAPTER 6.

### HISTORY OF THE ACADEMY.

About the year 1828 the inhabitants of the town began to feel the need of something more than a common-school education for their boys and girls, and the Johnson Academy came into being. Mr. John Chesamore, who was then a shoemaker here, his shop being where the P. O. now stands, thought he knew of a man, one Dr. Carpenter, a Universalist preacher of Chelsea, who might be secured as teacher of such an institution. He went on horseback to Chelsea, hired his man, and gave up his shop for a school-room, there being then no academy building. There were sixteen pupils to begin with, and benches and

desks were put in to accommodate them. As the school increased, several people had arm chairs made, with one arm wide enough to hold books and slate, for the use of their children. Some of these chairs may still be found among the descendants of those old families, for chairs, in those days, were made of honest, straight-grained stuff.

The Academy building was erected in 1830, and supplied with what was, for those days, a good chemical and philosophical apparatus, all by voluntary subscription. It must be remembered that the population of the town at that time was only 1079, and that the people were heavily taxed all those years for the necessary improvements in a comparatively new country; all this must be borne in mind if we would appreciate the sacrifices our ancestors made to plant this institution of learning in our midst. It was chartered as Johnson Academy, November 8, 1832, Thomas Waterman, Representative.

Dr. Carpenter was succeeded by Perry Haskell, who married, while teaching here, one of Sterling's fair daughters, Miss Lucy Vilas. She did not live many years, but he attained to extreme old age, and we read of his death not many years ago.

November 15, 1836, Lamoille County having been formed by the Legislature, an act was passed incorporating the school as the "Lamoille Co. Grammar School," and public lands were granted towards its support. Levi B. Vilas was our representative that year. The act was signed by Carlos Coolidge, Speaker of the House, by D. M. Camp, President of the Senate, and Silas Jenison, Governor.

E. M. Toof of St. Albans was the next principal of the school, and we find this advertisement in the Vt. State Paper, published in Johnson, May 14, 1839.





ACADEMY, AS REBUILT IN 1847



"Lamoille County Grammar School."

Johnson, Vermont.

The principal of this institution has recently made arrangements to receive into his family, in addition to his present number, several boys, to whose mental and moral culture the strictest attention will be paid.

The course of instruction embraces all the branches of a thorough classical, mathematical and polite education.

It will be the aim of the principal to assist the pupil in forming opinions and habits founded in manliness, reason and Christian morality, as well as to develop and strengthen his intellectual powers.

Six hours will be spent, each day, in the public school-room, and the remainder of the time, not necessary for recreation, will be devoted to private recitations, and other mental exercises.

The charge for each scholar, per year, will be \$150, payable half-yearly, in advance. No extra charges except for clothing, books and stationery, which will be furnished according to the direction of parents and guardians, left discretionary with the principal.

No scholar is received for a less time than one year, unless by special agreement.

A short vacation will be allowed the scholars in the month of August, if desired by their parents.

Application may be made to the principal by letter, or otherwise.

References, E. M. Toof, A. B., Principal; Rev. D. Warren, Rev. Albert Stone, Johnson; Hon. D. P. Noyes, Morristown; Rev. J. Wheeler, D. D., President of the University of Vermont, Burlington."

Principals after this were B. J. Tenny, William T. Herrick, C. Adams, Lyman T. Flint and Simeon H. Stevens, who died suddenly, in the midst of a good degree of success. He was succeeded by the Rev. Jason F. Walker, a Methodist clergyman, whose wife was a lady of

more than ordinary culture and refinement, and well fitted for the position which she assumed as proprietress of a young ladies' boarding-house. A limited number of young ladies were accommodated with board at the Walker house, (I. L. Pearl's old house,) and had daily drill in the proprieties of life. Such drill was invaluable to young girls, just entering upon life's stage of action, but, with the proverbial school girls' appetite, they were not properly appreciative of the ceremonies attending meals, and were wont to declare that their fare consisted mainly of plates and compliments, so that they were only saved from starvation by the barrel of crackers behind the pantry door!

L. O. Stevens, who followed Mr. Walker, solicited subscriptions for repairing and enlarging the Academy, in 1847, twelve hundred dollars being then raised and expended.

Zebina K. Pangborn was the next principal, under whom the school was the largest in its history, numbering, at one time, 225 pupils, so that the vestry of the Congregational church was used for chapel exercises and many recitations. There followed H. M. Wallace, Reuben C. Benton, Moses P. Parmalee, Joseph Marsh, a son of President Marsh of the University of Vermont, who had charge but a short time, Samuel H. Shonyo, who took charge in 1860, continuing two years, Geo. W. Squier, who had also been previously connected with the school, and Miss Almira Benton who had charge during the fall term of 1863. Then came S. H. Pearl, and in the summer of 1866 the building was almost entirely rebuilt, and enlarged to more than double its former size, finished and furnished in a most substantial manner, to meet the increased wants of the school, the means furnished, as before, by the voluntary subscriptions of an enterprising and generous community. Calvin Whiting of the Building Committee had the laboring oar.

The school struggled along, through all these years, with the varying fortunes of similar institutions in the State, sometimes flourishing vigorously, then declining till some new impulse gave it fresh life.

It accomplished a good work in the community, fitting many for the responsible position of teachers, there being a special "Teachers' Class" in the spring and fall terms. One spring when M. P. Parmelee was principal, there being no hour of the day when all who wished to attend the Teachers' Class were free from recitations so that they could do so, the class met at the Academy at five o'clock in the morning, from about the first of April until the close of the term, the middle of May.

A large number of young men were prepared here for the collegiate course. The Academy had among its teachers many graduates from various colleges, some of whom afterwards attained to honorable positions in other professions. The reputation of the school was such that it was extensively patronized by students from neighboring States, and from the Provinces.

In February, 1866, the Lamoille Co. Grammar School, having previously surrendered its charter, became a State Normal School under an act of a previous Legislature. It began its new career with about 50 students.

Its graduates must now number nearly a thousand, and hundreds of them are filling positions of responsibility and distinction. Among them are the Superintendent of the Industrial School at Vergennes, the Superintendent of the famous Elmira Reformatory, N. Y.; the Superintendent of the Essex Co. Truant School, Lawrence, Mass.; the editor of the Engineering News, N. Y. City; supervisor of music at the State Normal School, Whitewater, Wis.; county superintendent of schools, Omaha, Nebraska; superintendent of Thompson's Island School, Boston Harbor; mayor of Everett, Mass.; major of ordinance, U. S. Army; teacher of Domestic Science, N. Y. City; foreman of construction, Vermont Marble Co.; and every year adds to the list of useful, honored graduates.

The Normal teachers since S. H. Pearl have been,

C. D. Mead,  
H. S. Perrigo,  
W. C. Crippen,  
Edward Conant,  
A. H. Campbell,  
R. A. Waterbury,  
W. E. Ranger,  
J. L. Alger, and  
Edward D. Collins,

whose remarks on the state of the school since he assumed charge, two years ago, follow:

The most important changes made during the past two years may be included under the following headings:

#### I. EQUIPMENT.

(a) Extension of cabinets at the Normal and Training Schools, for use in keeping records of

1. Students and graduates of the Normal School.
2. The Teachers' Bureau of the Normal School.
3. Pupils' Reports at Graded School.
4. Pupils' work at Graded School.
5. Minerals and Specimens at Graded School.
6. Circulating Library for pupils of Graded School.
7. Magazines and periodicals at the Normal School.
8. Cabinet for science specimens at the Normal School.
9. Normal School Libraries on card catalog system.

(b) Tiffany Industrial Cabinet, for use at both Normal and Graded Schools.

(c) Chickering Concert Grand Piano at Normal School.

(d) Furnace at the Normal School, doing away with four stoves and supplying fresh heated air to the parts of the building not reached by the old furnace.

(e) The addition to the Normal School Library of about 300 volumes.

(f) The beginning of a small circulating library of good juvenile literature at the Graded School.

## II. CURRICULUM.

A thorough revision has been made of the courses of study. The preparatory year has been dropped. The first year's work is made the foundation on which the students are to begin their practice teaching in the second year. The second year's work emphasizes both the professional and cultural sides of the student's training and is the natural outgrowth of the first year's studies. A third year—the Higher Course, so-called—continues the work of each department of study and gives opportunities never before offered in the State Normal Schools of Vermont to gain a high degree of preparation for teaching. Individual attention can be given to students of the third year, and although it is not expected that the majority of students will complete this year, it is confidently predicted that the best positions in graded schools in the State will be gained by those who do take it. High School graduates enter, as before, one year in advance of the regular students, and have some further modifications of the course to adapt it to their needs, when their preparation warrants it.

## III. MISCELLANEOUS.

Among the changes which have been welcome are the repairs generously made by the trustees of the Lamoille County Grammar School in laying hard wood floors and replacing dilapidated windows. At the graded school, money raised by the children has been expended in putting the walls in good sanitary condition and in tinting them. Flowers were furnished to the children last year from the geranium

bed of the Normal School and their bright blossoms made all the school rooms more cheery. Pots were purchased with a balance of money remaining in Miss Palmer's hands. The slight extra expense of giving the grounds of the Normal School attention through the summer makes the lawn a beautifying element in the village instead of an eyesore. It is to be regretted that the splendid opportunity offered by nature at the graded schools cannot be improved.

The character of Normal School work has greatly changed in the last few years. The growth in importance of scientific study has been reflected in our courses for teachers, and the method no less than the matter has been modernized. I feel that no part of a student's training is more valuable than her laboratory work. The School Garden has been developed, not as a fad, but as sort of an outdoor laboratory for botanical and nature study along the utilitarian (vegetable gardening) and esthetic (floral gardening) sides. In music we are attempting to make the work of the school distinctively practical, and we are utilizing our efforts in such ways as the mid-winter and Commencement Concerts and recitals. In connection with our work in English language and literature, the instructors are supervising the reading of students along historical, biographical, and literary lines; it will be impossible after this year for a student to complete her work without having read a considerable amount of the best reading, most helpful in her future work.

Remaining for development are certain lines of work no less desirable than those mentioned; but enough has been said to indicate that notable progress has been made in the last few years in this institution. The evidences of public recognition of this fact come from outside the State as well as from within. Teachers are accepted on the credentials of the State Normal School where a short time ago they were not accredited.

## CHAPTER 7.

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"Little of all we value here,  
Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year  
Without feeling and looking rather queer.  
In short, there's nothing that keeps its youth,  
So far as I know, but a tree and truth."  
—O. W. HOLMES.

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### ABSTRACTS FROM THE TOWN RECORDS.

The first town record book is a thin one of coarse paper with a parchment cover, and looking much the worse for its 118 years of wear and tear. Some of the leaves have seen literal "tear," as nearly half of the first three have been eaten away by mice. This explanation of their sorry condition is not original with us, and we might have thought them to have been torn by some person who lacked proper regard for the ancient sanctities, but midway in the book we find a leaf, on which a deed had been recorded, mutilated in precisely the same way, and below the deed is written,

"The above Record Was Torn by the mice, And I Have Re-entered What is Torn away."

So there it is, put in at the bottom of the page, in a jumble.

The title page sets forth in large, bold script, quite unlike any that follows in the book,

*"Town Ledger A or 1st  
For the Town of  
Johnson  
State of  
Vermont"*

Whosoever may have been the hand that penned these words, it has long since turned to dust.

From the fragments that remain of the first leaf we learn that a town meeting was called March the 4th; 1789, that it met and chose officers, among them Aaron Smith and others to lay out roads, and adjourned to the 31st of March.

JONA. McCONNELL,

Town Clerk.

At a meeting the first day of August, "Lieut. Thomas McConnell, Geo. Gregg and Moses McConnell were chosen a committee to hire a Surveyor and lay out a Burying yard in No. 24." (The cemetery on Stearns St., the first one in town).

The town meetings in these earliest years all seem to be at the house of Jonathan McConnell, not far from where the grist mill now stands as he built the first mills at this point. At the September meeting in 1789 we read that Noah Smith of Bennington was chosen to represent the town in the General Assembly.



In these days, when, as a general thing, the "woods are full" of men who are anxious to be sent to the Legislature, it seems strange than an outsider should have been selected, but, as there was no regular Capital of the State until 1805, the Legislature "boarded around" from year to year. That year it was to meet at Bennington, a point farther distant from Johnson in actual time and labor of travel, than San Francisco is now. Amongst so few settlers, there was doubtless no one who wanted to go, and Noah Smith was right there on the ground; also, being one of the original proprietors, he could be depended upon to have the interests of the new town at heart.

The next two years Jonathan McConnell was sent as Representative. He was also chosen to attend the Convention at Bennington, Jan. 6th, 1791, "to take into consideration the expediency of joining the Federal Union." So Johnson was one of the 126 towns there represented.

The most of the book is given up to Surveyors' reports and measurements of roads, and to land records. The consideration in the recorded deeds is in "Pounds and Shillings, lawful money." Land was in some cases granted on condition of paying the taxes and living on it several years. What is now Waterville was then Coit's Gore, chartered in 1788 to three men, one of whom, Dr. William Coit, was the first physician in Johnson. The following, from him, is recorded Aug. 13, 1790:

"William Coit of Colchester, having unoccupied lands in Johnson, being desirous of promoting the cultivation and settlement of the same, will give a deed of fifty acres to each settler or occupier who shall go into possession by the first day of June next, and continue to occupy the same by themselves or assigns for the space of 7 years, of at least ten families who will occupy as aforesaid."

Daniel Mills paid for his land "sixty Spanish milled dollars." His deed was entered on file July 15th, 1791. He lived somewhere in the

vicinity of the lower arch bridge, and in 1790 the town established a ferry near there. It was:

"Voted that Mr. Daniel Mills should have the Farey opeset his house in sd. Johnson so long as he gives good atendance and Have one Peney  $\frac{1}{2}$  For any Person the sd. Mills careys acrost sd. Farey and one Peney  $\frac{1}{2}$  For ech Hors and Bagegedge He the sd. Mills shall sweem or Farey."

The September meeting in 1791 was called at the house of Daniel Mills.

Nothing is recorded in this book later than 1792.

The McConnells were evidently prominent men in the settlement. Out of the 23 deeds recorded in the book, they figured, either as buyer or seller, in 16 of them. As far as known, none of their descendants have lived in town for the last thirty years or more.

English money continued to be the lawful standard in all transactions up to 1796, and was mentioned more or less up to 1807, when an entire change was made to the "lawful currency of the U. S."

Another trace of the old-country customs is the use of the terms "yeoman" and "gentleman," in the recorded deeds, to designate those who were farmers or otherwise.

Military titles meant a great deal and were almost invariably mentioned in connection with the owner's name. It was "Lieut. Jona. McConnell," "Ensign Samuel Eaton," "Ensign Geo. Gregg," etc.

Johnson was in Chittenden County up to 1797, after that in Franklin Co. till in 1836 it was one of the twelve towns taken to form the new county, Lamoille.

From the close of this first book there seems to be lack of records for two or three years, the first record in Ledger No 2 being of the March meeting at the house of Ralph Ellinwood, (now known as the Foote place.)

"Voted to have a Pound erected. That the sd. Pound should be placed or built as near Moses McConnell's barn as can be convenient. Joshua

Sanders, Ralph Ellinwood, and Lieut. Geo. Gregg chosen Com. to place a Stake for the Pound."

"That all Sleds that are drawn by Cattle over two years old shall be four feet wide or Pay a fine of Twenty Shillings. Lieut. Geo. Gregg and Ensign John Simons a committee to inspect sleds."

"That the place of holding Town Meetings the present year shall be at the House of Lt. Thomas McConnell."

DANIEL COIT, Town Clerk.

At the September meeting that year 22 votes were cast for Governor.

March meeting 1795.

"Voted that Ralph Ellinwood's House be the place of holding publick meetings the present year."

"Voted that John Prince be a Poundkeeper the present year."

"Voted to raise five Pounds to defray town charges."

At a town meeting held the 22d day of April of that year, David Erwin, the newly-elected Town Clerk, closes his record thus:

"The above is a true Record from ye originall minets."

There were 26 votes for Governor at the September meeting.

List of those taking the Freeman's oath:

1794

Nathan Atwell  
Joel Ferry  
Henry Eaton  
Zebulon Norris  
Robert Wilson  
Nathaniel C. Sawyer

1795

Ralph Ellinwood  
John Prince  
Jonah Whipple  
Ebenezer Ferry  
Lufkin Heath  
William Chambers  
Benjamin Sanders  
David Foster  
Ebenezer Brooks  
William Heath  
Daniel Redington

At March meeting 1796 "Voted John Prince's dwelling house to be the place of public Town meetings for the year ensuing."

There were 27 votes cast for Thomas Chittenden, Governor, at the September meeting of that year.

March meeting 1797.

"Voted that the Bridge over the north Branch By the mills be kept in repair by the Town at Large, that the Selectmen order Each Surveyor in the Town of Johnson to work on sd. Bridge an Equal proportion according to the List in their District till they do make it sufficiently passiable, and that the Selectmen make a tax and appropriate the same for that purpose." (This bridge was above where the mill-dam is now).

"Voted that the town post should be at Mr. John Prince's for the year ensuing."

At the September meeting there were 35 votes cast for Governor.

September 1798, Ezekiel Cram, David McConnell and Abijah Hawley took the freeman's oath, 37 votes for Governor.

March meeting 1799, elected 13 Petit Jurors and 4 Grand Jurors, the first instance recorded. "Voted that Dr. Larrabee's house be the Town post, and the place for holding meetings the ensuing year."

Thirty-nine votes for Governor in September.

March meeting 1800.

"Elected Geo. Gregg, Aaron Smith and William H. Larrabee a Committee to superintend the clearing and fencing the two burying grounds in Johnson. That the Committee aforesaid be empowered to purchase the two pieces of land which are now occupied as burying grounds in sd. Johnson, to wit, The one by McConnell's mills [the old village cemetery] and the other by Wm. Redington's [the Plot cemetery] to contain one acre each in as square a form as may be, and to clear and fence the same as they shall think most convenient."

At a legally warned meeting held December 29th of that year, the voters seemed to "get on their ear," as witness the following business transacted:

"Resolved, That all old surveyors Bills and credit thereon, and all demands against the town for work done on the roads upon said Bills that

have been given out since the settlement of the Town up to the year 1800, shall be considered satisfied and forever discharged."

"Resolved, that a Vote for a town tax passed at an annual town meeting in March 1799 for the purpose of defraying the expense of repairing the mill bridge shall not be revived."

"Resolved also that a demand exhibited against the town by Moses McConnell for the sum of \$7.50, shall not be allowed."

This was the way our forefathers took to begin the new century with a clean slate! To that end, it was very fitting that at the March meeting, 1801, it was:

"Voted, that John Griswold, Sam G. Eaton, Jr., and Wm. H. Larrabee be a committee to draft a subscription for the purpose of seeing what sums will be subscribed to support preaching of the Gospel the present year."

At an adjourned meeting in April the question was raised, "Shall the clearing and fencing of the burying grounds be hired by venduing the same to the lowest bidder?" and it passed in the affirmative. Accordingly Mr. Robert Wilson bid them off, the one by William Reddington's "to clear and fence for fifteen dollars, and the one by the Mills to clear and fence for ten dollars, and to take his pay in grain."

September 1801, 45 votes cast for Governor.

At a legally warned meeting in April, 1802, it was on motion of Capt. Robert Balch:

"Resolved, That from and after the first day of May next untill the middle of October next following, the owner of every hog that shall be found running at large in the road or Common shall forfeit to the person complaining and pay a fine of 75 Cents for each hog so found, together with Costs to be recovered before any Justice of the Peace as in action of Debt.

Provided, that nothing in this Act shall affect any person whose hogs shall accidentally break out of his yard but all such as shall intentionally let them run at large."

"Voted, that the Selectmen be a Committee to divide the town into school districts."

Took the freeman's oath:

1800	1802
Moses Balch	Asa Waterman
James Heath	Charles Dugar
Stephen D. Cheney	Moses Eaton
1801	Thomas Waterman
Geo. Westgate	Samuel Waters
Asa Clark	Reuben Morgan
Levi Nichols	Araunah Waterman
John Carter	Asahel Berry
Joel Wheeler	

April 8, 1802. "Resolved, That there be a committee of three appointed to determine on a center of this town, and that Sam G. Eaton, Jr., Joel Wheeler and Geo. Gregg be that Committee."

The March meeting 1803 was called at the house lately occupied by William H. Larrabee, and it was there "Voted, that Araunah Waterman's shop be the place to hold town meetings for the year ensuing."

At an adjourned meeting in June of that year it was voted to divide the town into five school districts, and the metes and bounds of the same were described. One article in the warning was "To see if the Town will appoint some suitable persons as grave diggers," but this was passed over by vote.

At the September meeting there were about 50 votes for Governor.

On the first Monday in December, a meeting was called "To see if the Town will pass a vote to have the Small pox Brought in to town and Carried on by inoculation or not.'

At the meeting it was "Voted to have the Small Pox Brought into Town." But at the March meeting, 1804, it was "Voted, not to have the Small pox in Town this Spring."

"Voted that Araunah Waterman's dwelling house be the place for holding Town Meetings for the year ensuing."

It seems that the clearing and fencing of the burying grounds which was provided for three years before had not been carried into effect, so, at a Town meeting called on the 20th of March it was voted,

"To procure three different places for burying-yards in Johnson.

Voted to have one burying yard on the South Side of the river lamoll as near to San G. Eaton's as will best Convene the Inhabitants of sd. Town. Then voted to procure half an Acre near to Mr. Waterman's mills for a burying-yard, the same that has heretofore been occupied as such. Then voted to procure one Acre of Land as near to the Center of sd. Town as will best Convene the Inhabitants of sd. Town for a burying-yard. Then voted to exclude the person or persons from all expence in regard to the Burying grounds who have or Shall Deed the Land Gratis for the above purpose to the Town.

Then voted that the above burying yards Should be Cleared and fenced as soon as may be after Deeded to the Town.

Voted to choose a Com. of three with the advice of the Inhabitants to Stake out and Superintend the Clearing and fencing three Graveyards in this town.

Voted John Simons, Geo. Westgate and Jonathan Burnham as a Committee to Carry the above into efect.

Voted the Selectmen Should take Deeds of the above Lands that are or Shall be procured for Burying yards in behalf of the Town of Johnson."

At a town meeting called in April, it was "Voted to raise 114 Dollars as a Tax to repair the Bridge near John Simons," (now the lower arch bridge).

"Voted that four-fifths of the aforesaid Tax may be paid by the Inhabitants Lyable to pay sd. Tax in Labour, and that the selectmen as a Committee be and hereby are directed to call on the several surveyors in sd. Town for the Quota of men, Team and Tools that may be necessary each day to Carry on the Business of repairing sd. Bridge and that the surveyors shall duly Notify such a part of their destrict as required by sd. Committee and make return of the same at least 24 Hours before the time that the Labourers are needed and that sd. surveyors be directed to take what ever Number of men is wanted on the List of their bill as is enroled in sd. list by sd. Committee, and that on the Neglect of any Person being so duly Notified he, she or they shall be for ever after Liable to pay their proportion in hard money."

At the March meeting in 1805 it was voted to hold the Town Meetings for the year at Araunah Waterman's, as they had been doing.

The first record of "warning a person out of town" was made in that year.

"Johnson, June 11, 1805.

To either Constable of Johnson in the Co. of Franklin, Greeting:

You are hereby required to summons Festus Prince (Black man) now residing in Johnson to depart said Town. Hereof fail not, but of this precept and your doings herein due return make according to law," &c.

The Constable did his duty, and made proper return thereof, fee 75 cents.

At a meeting held in June to see about building a bridge over the branch by the Mills, it was "voted not to rebuild the bridge in the old place." (It is supposed that the first bridge was carried out by the breaking away of Eden Pond in April of that year.) A committee was appointed to report where was the best place to build the bridge, and they reported it best to "set it below the Island that is nighest the Gristmill."

"Voted to raise a Tax of 85 Dollars payable in Grain Next January for the purpose of building the Bridge."

At a special meeting called in August they reconsidered the vote taken as to the best place to build the bridge, and "voted, to build it over the Island," (practically where the twin bridges are now).

At the March meeting 1806, it was voted to hold Town Meetings at Amos Dodge's for the year ensuing. The Plot was beginning to have aspirations towards being a center of influence. The ratable property at that time was \$5,695.

At the September meeting there were 41 votes for Governor. One hundred and eighty-six towns were represented in the Legislature.

March 1807 it was "voted to hold Town meetings at Araunah Waterman's for the time being."



The Legislature that year assessed a tax of one cent an acre for the purpose of building a State's Prison.

At the March meeting, 1809, it was "voted to raise a tax to supply the town with ammunition as the law directs."

"Voted to have the town meetings at the school-house in the Center of the Town." [The school-house by the Plot cemetery].

March meeting, 1810, "voted to build a pound, and to set it on the plot near to the corner of the roads near Aaron Smith's, and voted to raise a tax of \$40 to defray the expense of building it."

"Voted to hold the town meetings at Araunah Waterman's the next year."

"June 11th, 1811. This may certify that the following persons are lawfully equipped for military duty:

Thomas Waterman	Sam C. Cook
Daniel Griswold	Isaac Griswold
Daniel Dodge	Asa Waterman
Elisha Dodge, Jr.	William Dodge
Josiah Jones	Azariah Waterman."

March meeting of 1812, "voted to hold the town meetings for the ensuing year at Amos Dodge's."

It must be remembered that war with England was declared in June of that year. At a special meeting called July 20th, the town

"Voted to raise a tax sufficient to raise the wages of each man who is or may be detached from this town previous to Oct. next and who shall be called into actual service, so that no man shall receive a less sum than ten dollars per month with what shall be allowed by the Gov't. of the U. S. provided he shall serve his time to the satisfaction of the commanding officer." "Voted to make up the detached soldier wages in money or grain to be made upon the Grand List of 1811."

"Voted to raise one hundred dollars to purchase fire-arms for the use of the town."

At the September meeting of that year it was "voted to support Levi Clark, Amos Dodge, Araunah Waterman, John Simons, Sam'l

Boyes, Jonathan Burnam and Samuel Miller as a Committee of Safety for the town of Johnson."

This Committee were:

"To use their endeavors to detect spies or curtail secret conspiracy to hold correspondence with each other and with similar Committees in Neighboring Towns and States, and in every way to aid or assist in supporting the laws of the United States, and to take any measures that shall be deemed necessary when met to carry the above into effect."

There were 74 votes cast for Governor.

March 4th, 1813, the records show that there were in the Center School District, (now known as No. 9) 76 children over 4 and under 18 years of age. The whole number in the town was 235.

"Johnson, June 1813.

This may certify that the following persons were duly equipped according to law at our annual June muster:

Thos. Waterman	Josiah Morgan, Jr.
Daniel Dodge	Joseph Foster
Josiah Jones	William Boyes
Asa Waterman	Sam'l Dodge
Levi Nichols, Jr.	Ralph Hill
John Griswold, Jr.	John H. Burnam
Azariah Waterman	Thomas Waterman, Captain."

The town meetings of that year were called at Thomas Waterman's dwelling house. The September meeting was adjourned from there to the chamber of John Wier's store. Vote for Governor, 83.

The meeting for September 1814 was called at Capt. Waterman's Inn (the old hotel).

The battle of Plattsburg occurred September 11 of that year, and Capt. Waterman and his company were there.

Meetings continued to be held at the Hotel and a special vote was taken, March 1815, that they should be held there the ensuing year. The same vote was taken for two years following. The "Flat" was plainly dominating the "Plot" by this time, and no more town meetings were held up there.



Hotel built by Thos. Waterman in 1813, and operated by him and by Dr. Meigs for over 40 years.



THE OLD MERRIAM HOUSE ON RAILROAD ST.



The March meeting of 1818 was adjourned to Joseph Waterman's house. At that time there were 70 children in the Center School District, and 36 at what is now East Johnson.

In November 1819, "voted to rebuild the bridge across the branch and voted a tax of 1 cent 5 mills on the Dollar to defray the expense of said Bridge, to be paid in grain delivered at the grist mill by the 1st of February."

Money was scarce in 1820. "Voted to pay the school tax in grain, also a 3 per cent. tax for building and repairing bridges, in stock the first day of October or in grain the 1st of January."

Appraised value of property in 1821, \$1,847.30.

"St. Albans, Sept. 19th, 1821.

Agreeable to an act of the Legislature of Vt. in 1820, the Listers in the Co. of Franklin met, and in averaging the several Towns in said Co. have deducted from the Land in the Town of Johnson 25 per cent on the Dollar, which brings the land in the town of Johnson to the average price of four dollars & 94 cents per acre."

There were 321 scholars in town in 1821.

March meeting 1822 met at Thomas Waterman's and adjourned to the school-house (the red school-house at the head of the street).

The first reference to care of special town paupers is found in the record of an adjourned meeting of April 5th, 1823, when it was

"Voted that John Putney, a town pauper be put up at vendue to the lowest bidder to be kept for the term of one year, (if he should live during said term) to be well fed, clothed & attended. Whereupon the said Putney was bid off by Benjamin Patch at ninety cents per week, payable in grain. The Town to be accountable for the Doctor's bills, and necessary Liquors in case of extraordinary sickness, in which case the said Patch is to notify the overseers of the Poor before making any expense to the town."

The March meeting of 1824 was called "at the School House near Azariah Waterman's."

At an adjourned meeting the same month it was "Voted to appropriate one hundred and fifty dollars of the Town's Public Money

for the purpose of hiring preaching in the said Town for the ensuing year."

In 1826 the town "voted that Horses, Sheep and Swine be restrained from running at large on the Highways and Commons in the town of Johnson."

At the March meeting in 1827 it was

"On motion, voted to settle Elder Joel P. Hayford as their first settled minister, and should he be settled it is expressly understood that the Land in said Town granted to the first settled minister, which may fall to him in consequence of such settlement, with the rents which may already have accrued on such lands, shall be, by the said Joel P. Hayford deeded and released to the Town with the following conditions, that it shall be forever held sacred for the support of the Gospel in said Town, to be divided among the several societies which are or may be in said Town, according to their number, except fifty Dollars, which he is to convey to the Baptist Society."

"On motion, voted that the selectmen be authorized and requested to secure bonds of Elder Joel P. Hayford, previous to his settlement in said town, conditioned that the said Hayford relinquish to the said Town the lands and avails thereof, agreeable to the vote of said Town."

For several years the main business at town-meeting seemed to be building and repairing bridges and highways, and altering, by enlarging or diminishing, the size of school districts, to suit the convenience or whim of persons interested.

March 1st, 1831, the town-meeting was called "at the school-house near the Academy," that building having been erected the year before.

March 13, 1832, made choice of John W. Fowler, sexton for the graveyard at the village." Cornelius Lynde, Jr., was elected Town Clerk in 1833, Daniel Dodge having served in that capacity for nine years.

In 1834 the number of scholars in town was 434.

To show the conservative spirit of those times, in November 1835, a meeting of the Freemen of the town was called "for the purpose of

electing a Delegate to represent the town in a Convention at Montpelier to consider the amendments to the Constitution proposed by the Council of Censors." The meeting thus warned voted to adopt the following: "Resolved, That we, as a Town, instruct our Delegate to oppose all the proposed amendments to the Constitution."

At March meeting in 1838 it was voted

"On motion, that the public ministerial money which has now accumulated, together with the notes which are now in the hands of the selectmen, and which were given for Rents of Ministerial Land, shall be divided on or about the first day of May next, among the several religious societies in this town in proportion to their numbers, to be ascertained by each person's writing the name of the Society he wishes to receive his share of said money and notes, on his list, when he delivers it to the Listers on the second day of April next."

This is the first record of dividing the ministerial money, and it was taken for granted that every man with a list had a church preference.

March 1839, Dexter Whiting was chosen Town Clerk. Number of scholars in town, 494.

In 1840 the town did a little temperance missionary work by voting "to defray the collection of a fine of seven dollars due the town from \_\_\_\_\_ so long as he shall delay to drink ardent spirits, and no longer."

S. S. Pike was elected Town Clerk in 1841, an office which he held until his death in 1877.

Number of scholars in 1841, 511.

In 1842, at the Freeman's meeting in September, after five unsuccessful ballots for Representative, the vote was unanimous for adjournment.

Again, in 1843, after two ballots the meeting adjourned.

And in 1844, after three ballots.

January 2, 1845, a special town meeting was called "at the school-house opposite the Academy," where the Town meetings had been held for so many years, at 1 o'clock p. m. The meeting was opened, and voted to adjourn to S. Wires' store, probably because the old school-house could not be properly warmed, it having already been abandoned for school purposes.

At the September meeting after the fifth ballot for Town Representative resulting in no choice, the meeting adjourned.

In January 1846, a special town meeting was called at the office of S. S. Pike, and the March meeting was held at the Congregational meeting-house.

At that meeting it was "voted, that the selectmen be a committee to procure the use of one of the meeting-houses in Johnson in which to hold town and Freemen's meetings for the ensuing year, to make such bargain with either one of the Societies having the control of said Houses, as they think best for the interests of the town."

Town meetings continued to be held in the Congregational church until, the present church being built in 1851, the town the next year bought the old one for a town house.

The first town meeting called to "vote upon the question of License or no-License, in accordance with an Act of the Legislature approved November 3, 1846," was in March 1847.

The result was "No License 56, License 49."

At the September meeting that year it is recorded that "At three o'clock the votes for Town Representative were duly taken, sorted and counted, and no choice made, when the meeting adjourned so far as respects the choice of a Town Representative."

In 1848 they succeeded in electing Jonathan C. Dodge, after six years of no representation.

In 1849 after three ballots there was no choice of Representative, and, on motion, the meeting adjourned.



At March meeting 1850 the voting in relation to License was License 98, No License 15.

At the September meeting five ballots were taken for Town Representative without a choice, and the meeting adjourned.

September 1851, S. S. Pike was selected on the first ballot, and re-elected in 1852.

In 1853, after three ballots they made no choice. In 1854 W. G. Ferrin was elected on the second ballot.

In 1855 at the annual March meeting it was "Voted that the Town purchase for the use of the Town 40 copies of Waring's Elements of Agriculture."

In January 1856, the town "Voted to accept the part of the town of Sterling which the Legislature had granted to it at its last session."

March 5, 1861. "Voted that the selectmen be instructed to engage some person at a price that would be considered reasonable to ring the church bell three times each week-day, and at usual times on the Sabbath, and on all public occasions (not including menageries and showmen) and to ring and toll the bell on all occasions of deaths and funerals for the year ensuing, free of expense to individuals and at the expense of the said town."

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Sept. 16, 1862. "Voted that the selectmen be directed to borrow the sum of four hundred and fifty dollars, or such sum as may be necessary, and pay the same to the soldiers, fifty dollars each, who enlisted from Johnson under the last call of the President for troops. Payable when mustered in United States service."

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December 19, 1863. "Voted that the selectmen be instructed to borrow a sum not exceeding Three Thousand Dollars, for the purpose of paying three hundred dollars each to volunteers that may hereafter enlist for the war under the recent call of the President of the United States, including the one that it is understood has enlisted, payment to be made to such enlisted men when mustered into the service of the United States."

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March 24, 1865. "Voted that in case it becomes necessary to furnish more men to carry on the war, that the selectmen be authorized to hire

them at their discretion, and borrow money on the credit of the town to pay the same."

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February 15, 1868. "Voted, by ballot, to accept of the act of the Legislature of this State entitled 'An Act to enable the towns therein named to aid in the construction of the Lamoille Valley Railroad.' Approved November 12, 1867."

"Voted to recommend and nominate Robert C. Cristy, Isaac A. Manning and Atwood Andrews to be Commissioners as named in the 3d section of said Act."

"Voted that the town take stock in said Railroad to the amount of Fifty Thousand Dollars and issue bonds for that amount."

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March 3, 1885. "The following preamble and resolution were introduced by H. A. Waterman, Esq.:

Whereas Dexter Whiting, Esq., in accordance with his generous nature, has seen fit to purchase and present to the Town of Johnson a valuable and elegant Town Clock, which he has caused to be erected for the benefit and pleasure of its citizens and the public in general,

Therefore, Resolved, That we, the citizens of said Town in Town Meeting assembled, return to Mr. Whiting a vote of thanks to express our heartfelt gratitude for his munificence."

"Voted to adopt the foregoing preamble and resolutions."

In 1893, in accordance with a law passed by the Legislature of 1892 providing for the Town System of Schools, the Selectmen appraised all the school houses, sites and property.

Johnson Public Library Trustees were first elected in 1895, since which time fifty dollars has been annually voted towards its maintenance.

Road mileage in town, not including pent roads, May 1900, 71 miles.

## CHAPTER 8.

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### RECOLLECTIONS OF JOHNSON VILLAGE AS IT WAS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE LAST CENTURY\*.

The population of the town of Johnson was in point of fact, 19 more, according to the census in 1840 than in 1900, so constant has been the emigration of our brightest and best into other parts of the country, notably within the last half century.

But there are certainly not more than two-thirds as many sets of farm buildings in town as there were 60 years ago, so many farms have been practically abandoned for tillage and are being allowed to revert to wilderness, which, for profit, ought never to have been cleared from them.

The village, however, is more than twice as large as in 1840. The count of the corporation in 1900 was 587, and it is much larger now. I propose to give you my earliest recollections of the village, in the early '40's.

Beginning with the Normal building, part of it, the original Academy, stood some twenty feet nearer the street, a square, two-story building surmounted by a cupola, in which hung the bell. The meadow between that and the cemetery was a swamp, wherein blue flags ran riot in their season, and multitudes of frogs made the spring evenings loud and melodious. There were only four dwellings on Stearns St., the Azariah Waterman house on the corner, where Frank Holmes now lives, and then it was all one green field, with a grassy

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\*Revised from a paper read before the Oread Literary Club of Johnson, by Mrs. Mattie W. Baker, in March, 1905.

path by its fence for a sidewalk, to where Mr. Boyles lives, then known as the Marshall Hosmer house. Then came the Caldwell house, where Mr. Odell lives, and the Leslie house opposite where Justus Dodge lived, and operated a tannery situated near where the tub-shop stands.

Above there, to Perkinsville, now East Johnson, was a quiet, country road, no noisy mills to drown the bird-songs, no bridges spanned the Gihon, and the only house on the way was a small one where Silas Griswold lives.

Returning to our starting point, we notice by the way that there were no houses on Gulf St. A little brook with high, mossy banks flowed at its side, where school children loitering on their homeward way in the golden summer afternoons used to stop and drag their dinner baskets in the deepest places, and were sometimes lucky enough to catch a minnow, causing great excitement.

At the farther end of the level you opened a gate to go up the road on Burnham hill, or kept straight on towards Hydepark, going up through the gulf thickly wooded on both sides clear to its upper end, in front of Morris Hill's, then known as the Day place; an ideal road on hot, summer days, but a pokey enough one on dark nights.

Between the Academy and the rise of land where Pearl's factory buildings are grouped, was more frog-pond, and that was all. The factory, a red painted building nearly in the same place as the present one, was burned in 1870. At its eastern end was a saw-mill, owned by Joseph Waterman, and the mill-yard, always more or less occupied by logs, extended to the street, except that a tiny dwelling-house stood where the wool-house now stands. An old two-story building, known as "the old red store" where John Wier formerly traded, stood where the blacksmith shop and hose-house now are. My earliest recollections are of a printing office in its second story.

In a yard occupying the corner where the Baptist church stands, was a one-story wooden house, the original Joseph Waterman house,





VIEW FROM THE ACADEMY IN 1847. Pencilling by S. L. Wiswall.

moved across the street from where B. A. Hunt's brick house stands, and occupied by the Waterman family while that house was being built, in 1838. In the fall of '55, to make way for the Baptist church which was to be built there the next year, this old house again took to the road, this time being drawn up on Stearns street, where it now forms part of the tub-factory store-house.

Returning to the head of the street, the first building, opposite the Academy and standing close up to the rock where T. J. Baker has started a little park, was the "old red school-house," probably the first framed one in town, and serving as school-house, town house and church for many years. It had become too old for use, and in the winter of '44 and '45 the village school for scholars living on this side of the Branch was held in the eastern part of Mr. Scott's house, then the Caldwell furniture shop. It was also held there in the following summer, while the school-house on Railroad St. next Mrs. Pierce's, was being built. That in turn was duly abandoned, and finally, drawn up on Main St., where it serves as Mr. Scott's blacksmith shop.

What is now the M. E. parsonage was then a plain, two-story building without porches, occupied by James Clark, who had a harness shop in the chamber. An old, one-story, unpainted house stood where Mr. Patten lives, and had been occupied by S. N. Tracy, the tailor. What is now the Opera House was then the Congregational church built in 1832. There was nothing between that and the Caldwell shop, now Mr. Scott's house. Joseph Poland, who was editing a paper here, lived where George Baker lives. My memory of him is of how impressive his bald head looked when he stood up before us as our Sunday School superintendent. He afterwards went to Montpelier, where he edited a paper for many years.

After the Poland house was a fine, large garden, where Dr. Prentiss' house stands, belonging to the Dr. Waite house, then owned by S. S. Pike. The Peck house was built by Judson Rowell, and oc-

cupied by him as a store, with dwelling above, till he failed in business and moved away. The Riddle store was built by J. M. Hotchkiss, and he, too, failed in trade. The business passed into other hands, but we believe the building has always been occupied as a store. That and the Peck building were exactly alike on the front, so that transient occupants sometimes inadvertently entered the wrong building.

Where C. P. Jones' store stands was a wide, open space, convenient to the Hotel; at the back was the Hotel barn, with open shed towards the street. The back part of the present Hotel was then the Main building, built and occupied as a Hotel at the time of the war of 1812. The battle of Plattsburg was September 11, 1814, and Thomas Waterman, proprietor of the Hotel, was there as Captain. Many of the town's able-bodied men were there, and the cannonading that day could be plainly heard here, filling the hearts of their friends with sore anxiety. About that time a squad of British officers rode through the village, and stopping at the Hotel, ordered dinner. The whole establishment hastened to do the bidding of the unwelcome guests, setting before them the best they could compass in the way of food and drink, and only smiling indulgently when, at the close of the meal, the half-drunken men jovially smashed a few glasses. Without as much as thanks for their entertainment they rode off, leaving the town to feel thankful that they had fared no worse at the hands of their braggart visitors.

Beyond the Hotel, to the corner, and down Railroad St. to the Warren house, was the Hotel orchard and garden, enclosed by a board fence. One small chestnut tree which grew in it was a great wonder to our childish eyes, it being the only one we had ever seen.

The Warren house was the old Hosmer house, and in the L part Marshall Hosmer and his father made chairs for many years. The tenement part of Mrs. Morgan's house stood where it does now, then came the Hickey house, occupied by Nathan Jones, blacksmith,



and no more buildings on that side of the street, to the Waterman brick house. Across the bridge was the Hunt house, now occupied by Geo. Goozey, and nothing else over there. No railroad then to disturb the quiet of this valley, nor of any other hereabouts, for that matter.

The present arch bridge was built in 1839 to replace one carried out by ice and high water in February of that year. Mr. Samuel Merriam was driving across it at the time, and only by whipping up his horse did he barely escape being carried away with the bridge. The "Lamoille Visitor" of that week, our town paper, in speaking of the heavy damages wrought by the flood elsewhere, for it was very widespread, said, "We were fortunate in only losing three bridges—all we had!"

The old Merriam house where Mr. Thomas lives, and the Doane house, now owned by Mrs. Pierce, were the only ones on that side of the street, till the yellow school-house was built on the level between the Pierce and Minott houses. From the school-house to the Moses Morse store, on the corner now occupied by Nye, was only the blacksmith shop. The store there at that time was the one now occupied by Nellie Hunt, moved across the street to make way for the present large one.

What is now the town clerk's office was a tin-shop operated by Paul T. Sweet and years later by Alexander Riddle. Where the Post-Office is, was a building which had been occupied variously as a shoe-shop and a furniture shop, not to mention that the Academy in its incipient stage, was located there. The Austin house was the Levi Reed house, and back in the yard beyond was an old, red house, one of the oldest on this side of the Branch, with nothing between that and the Allen hotel-stand, next the bridge, except Patch's grocery building, built by Samuel Morgan for a hat-shop below and dwelling above.

A wooden bridge spanned the Branch, in place of the present iron one, and below the bridge, about opposite Mr. Conger's was a small tenement house, built in the bank, its upper story opening on the street, its lower one, at the back, on the meadow. At each spring freshet more or less water came into the lower floor, so that the occupants had to move up stairs. Then every boy and girl in the village, no matter how good their home, envied the children in that house who could sail in wash-tubs in their kitchen. Such a swarm of small boys as used to hang around that house in time of spring rains, and ice going out of the Branch.

There were only four houses below the turn where the point of rock makes out into the road. The Lease house, now the Baptist parsonage, was the only one on that side of the street; there was a small, old house which Mr. Rogers owns, the Ellwood house, half the size it is now, occupied by P. T. Sweet, and the Vernon Patch house where Chas. Scott lived.

Retracing our steps, the Chamberlain and Hebb houses were much as now, the latter being the Chesamore place, but where Mr. Conger's is was a small ruined building bearing an old sign, "Hat factory," where Morgan and Sheldon once operated the hat-making industry. The two-story dwelling just above the bridge was then on the other side of the Branch, Chesamore's shoe-shop. It was moved across, after a small store and tailor's shop standing on the east side, was burned. The house Mr. Farrell lives in was occupied by the Ormsbees, and the Holmes house, a small, one-story building then, was the Lynde house. Mrs. Maria Davis' house was occupied by Mr. Beardsley. Previously Mr. Sheldon lived there, and made hats in the lower front room. Mrs. Andrews's house was the Moses Morse place, one of the "stately mansions" of the village. Where the Fullington house stands was the store occupied by Merriam & Lynde. It was burned in 1849, and Mr. Merriam, some years afterward, built the

brick house. Before that he lived in what is now Edmund Perkins' house on Railroad St. It stood where the Stevens house is. The Boyles store was the Post Office for several years, with J. B. Downer as postmaster. S. S. Pike, who was town clerk for a great many years, had his office in that building also.

The two cottages in the rear of the store were one dwelling, standing where the McFarland house stands, and occupied by Salmon Wires. All between that and the Hunt house, then Mr. Joseph Waterman's, was one big garden and orchard with a high picket fence through which we could see the rows of fine vegetables, the fruit and flowers, a grape-vine running luxuriantly over the rock, and a well-curb with the traditional "old oaken bucket." The Waterman starch-factory, a low one-story building, is part of the E. E. Holmes shop, and across the street, about where the end of the Baptist church sheds is, was an old house used as a tenement, two stories in front, sloping to one at the rear.

The bridges over the Gihon were open ones in those days. We are told that the first bridge over it, here in the village, was built above the mill-dam, about where the creamery stands. That bridge, we gather from the records, was carried off by the breaking away of Eden Pond, in April 1805. Thomas H. Parker and Jeduthem Stone of Eden had erected mills at the outlet of the pond and their dam being insecure, it broke away, carrying off their mills, and working destruction as the water passed down the valleys. It is said that it carried off acres of heavy timber, and even huge rocks were torn from their beds. Sixteen feet of water rolled nearly perpendicular.

A man on a fleet horse warned the few dwellers in this village of what was coming, so they had a little time to prepare for it. Araunah Waterman's house stood near where the widow Heath's house now stands, their barns being the other side of the branch, and they had a foot-bridge across. It was towards night, and the big boys, Thomas,

Joseph and Azariah, seized the milk pails, ran across the bridge, milked the cows and turned them off on to the hills, then hurried back, pulling up the planks of their bridge to save them from being swept away. Meanwhile the others had gathered what things they could well carry with them, and they all took to the hills. The flood came and washed out part of their cellar wall, carrying off the pork-barrel and general cellar stores, and leaving the house tipped down at one corner.

People all along the stream suffered more or less loss, and they brought a suit against Parker and Stone for damages. The suit ran for a number of years, as such things are prone to do, and at length the judge told the Johnson people that they had not brought the suit against the right party. It was the work of the Supreme Being. Each one paid his own costs, and the case ended.

Pearl St. was the one first built up, and the road then followed the windings of the Gihon, and came out below Mr. Hebb's. Candor compels me to state, that there being no Pearls in town in the early '40's, that street had not its present aristocratic title, but was known as Pollywog street, from the frog-pond near the grist-mill.

The shed part of I. L. Pearl's house stood where his house now stands, was occupied by various principals of the Academy, in turn, and was considered a good house in those times. Between that and the branch was waste land with some old apple-trees scattered about, and the river-bank bordered with all sorts of wild stuff that grows in neglected spots, cicuta being prominent. The old well belonging to the Araunah Waterman house was in use for many years after the house was torn down, and furnished water for that part of the street.

When O. & A. H. Buck were building the store now occupied by Harry Maxfield, in digging out earth to lay the foundation walls,

the workmen accidentally loosened stones in one side of the well, so that the water ran out, and the well collapsed.

The old house owned by Almon Whiting was the only other building on that side of the street, till you went up the hill, and away along the road to the top of the hill below Geo. Whiting's house. There stood the mill where Dexter Whiting ground bark for his tannery, situated at the head of the little meadow below the road. Quite a pond in the basin at the top of the hill furnished the power for running the bark-mill. The Pollywog street school-house stood just beyond Geo. Whiting's house, and above that were only three dwellings, the Ellinwood house, recently occupied by Jason French, the Fowler place, lately known as the Barton house, and two small, old houses on the Chase place, where Mr. Sherwin's big, square house stands.

Near where Carlos Oakes lives was the Baptist church; some of its timbers were used in building the present one. At the foot of the hill were the house lately purchased by Herbert Scott, and the Rushford house, then occupied by Andrew Dow, with gardens in the rear, but all the hills and meadows beyond, where the Graded School building and Mr. Waters' house stands, School St. itself and all, were included in the Geo. W. Hill farm, until 1870, when another bridge was built over the Gihon near the site of the present electric power plant and School St. was opened leading to it. Mr. Hill lived in a low, rambling, old-fashioned house, about where Barrows' store stands. It was the earliest hotel in the village, and near it was the Common, where June training and other outdoor public functions were held.

In 1812, while the youth of the town were having a Fourth of July jollification on this Common, the cannon they were firing exploded, and one young man was literally blown to pieces, so that his brains were scattered over the low roof of the Hotel. He was buried in the cemetery on Stearns St., and you can read this inscription on his tombstone:

"In memory of Stephen  
B. Huntington Son of  
Christopher and Eunice  
Huntington Who De-

parted This Life

July the 4 A D 1812

In the 20th year of  
his Age

Youth don't forgit As you

Pass by you'l Turn to

Iust As Well As I."

The Farnham house was originally the old Hotel barn, moved, and made over into a dwelling house. About where Mr. Ira Jones' house stands was a small building used as a cabinet shop by Dea. Robinson. The Laraway house was occupied by the widow Sheldon, after the death of her husband, the latter. Their younger son, Charles H. is well and favorably remembered by the older inhabitants of the town, and we were as proud to hear of his election and re-election to the office of Governor of South Dakota, some twelve or more years since, as we were sad, a few years afterward, to hear of his death.

The mill-house, burned in the summer of 1906, was probably one of the oldest houses in the village, occupied then by Blake, the miller. The grist-mill was a small affair, for no Western wheat or corn was brought here then. It simply did custom-work, grinding the farmers' grain, and taking out the toll allowed by law, one-sixteenth part, to pay for grinding. From this practice arose the saying common in those times, that "you could never tell upon whose grain the miller's pig was fattened," and another, which has passed into a proverb, that "the dust from an honest miller's hat will cure sore eyes." It was scandalously asserted that a miller's right hand grew into a peculiar bent shape, from scooping too low in the grain.

There was a miller in charge at one time who had a long, lanky son as his assistant, one of that sort of boys who do a great deal of "heavy standing around." Farmers were wont to feel, in those days, that their grain was, somehow, subjected to excessive toll, and some said it was this way:

The miller would come along to a row of bags of grain waiting to be ground, and would call out to his son:

"Hiram! have you tolled this grain?"

Without waiting for a reply, he would go on, "Of course you hain't, you lazy whelp! You never do nothin'!" and would proceed to take out the toll himself, but later developments would indicate that Hiram had attended to his work better than his father gave him credit for.

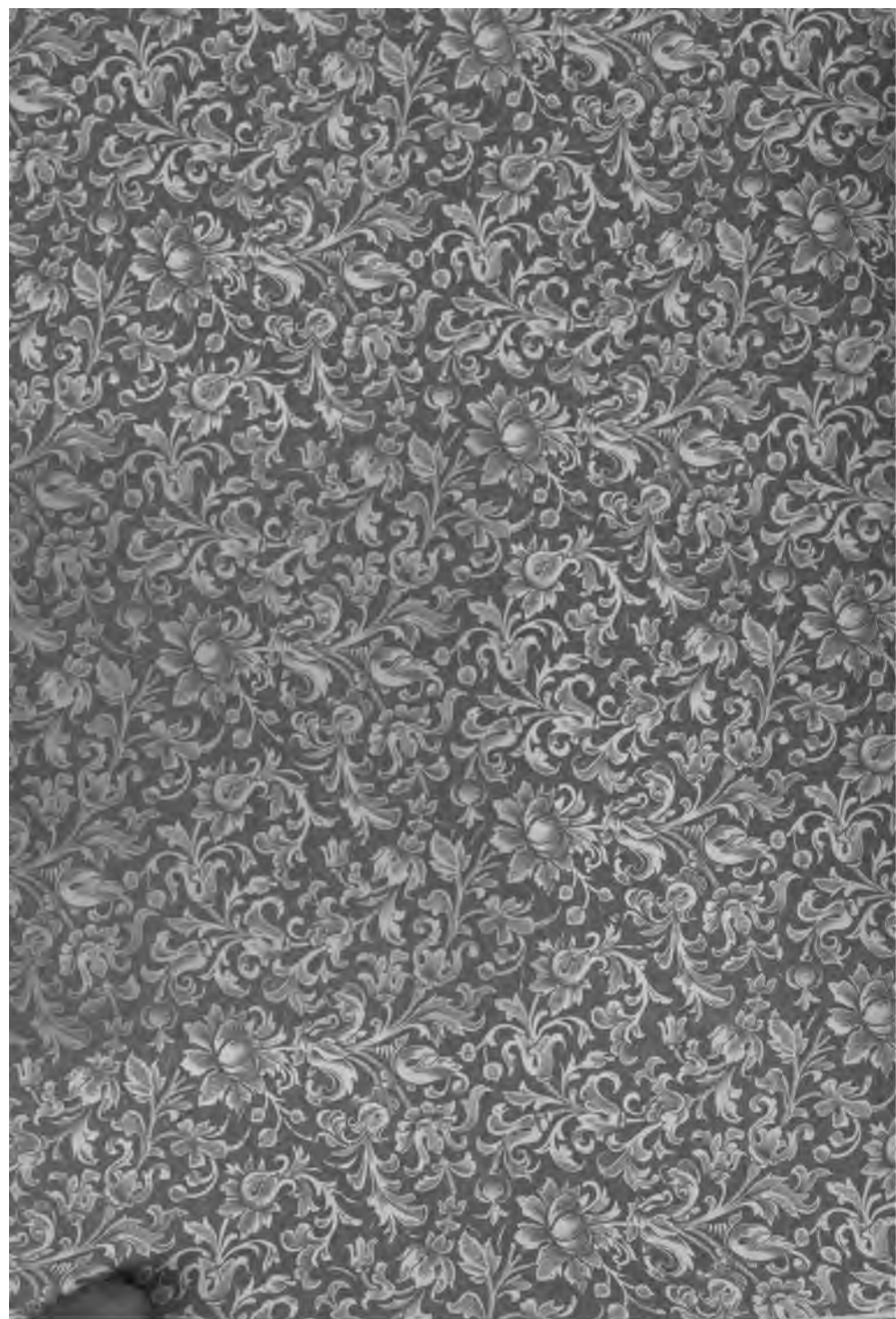
Sidewalks, as such, were practically unknown here, three score years ago. In summer we wended our way along the grassy roadside paths, but with winter snows teams and pedestrians alike kept to the highway. Most houses of any pretension whatever had their yards fenced in, a necessary precaution against hasty raids by the many village cows that were driven through the streets night and morning, all summer, to say nothing of the big droves of hundreds of cattle which were often driven through here on their way to the city markets. The door-yard fences were more or less pretentious, according to the taste and purse of the owner, and all had gates which were said to sag badly on the hinges where the marriageable daughters of the house were numerous.

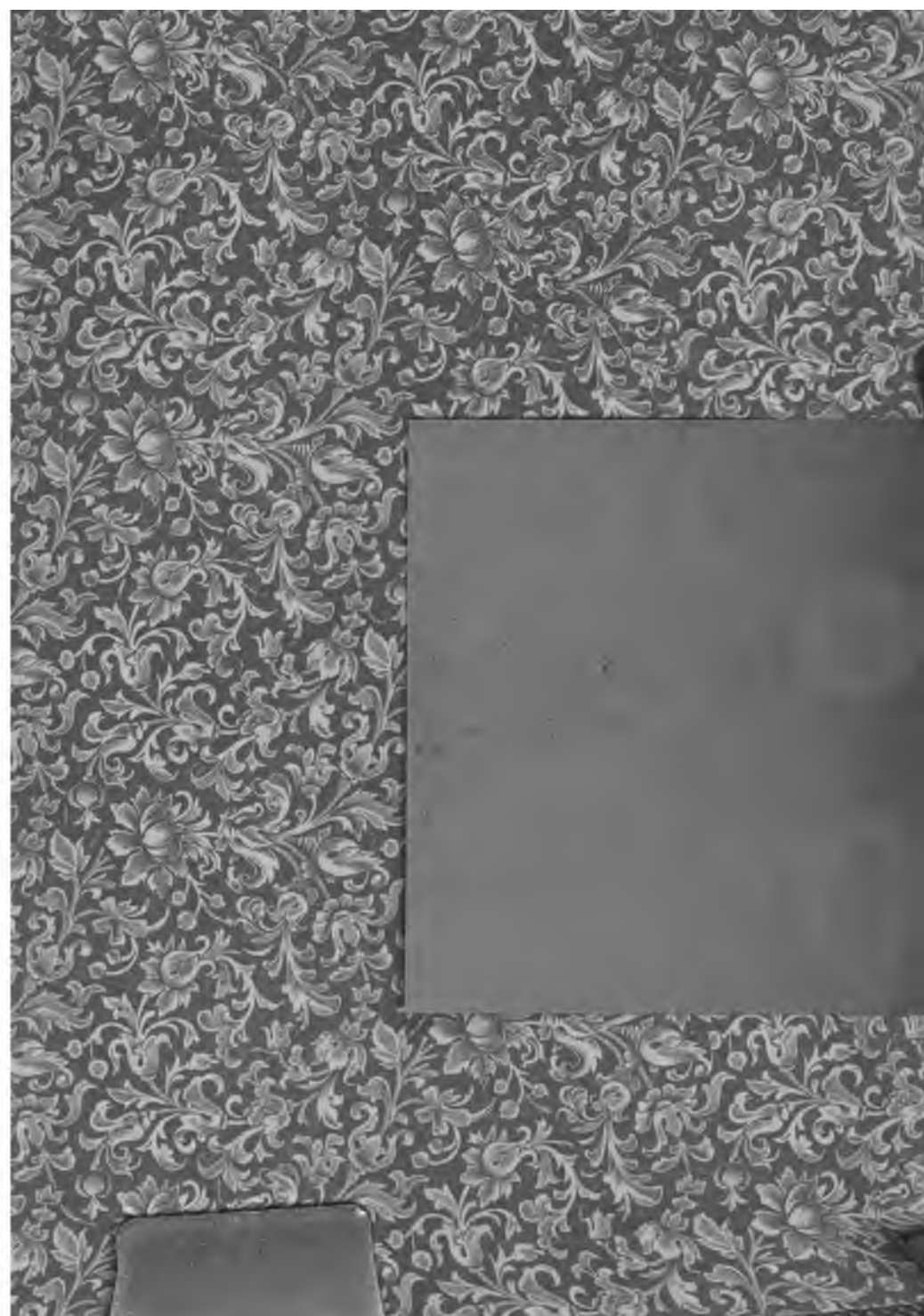
We have no reason to expect that Johnson will become a metropolis, but if it may never be much larger than now, it may certainly be better. It remains for every man, woman and child to show their civic pride by helping in every way possible to make the town a better place to live in, a cleaner, more pleasant, more wholesome place, better for its dwellers physically, morally and intellectually.

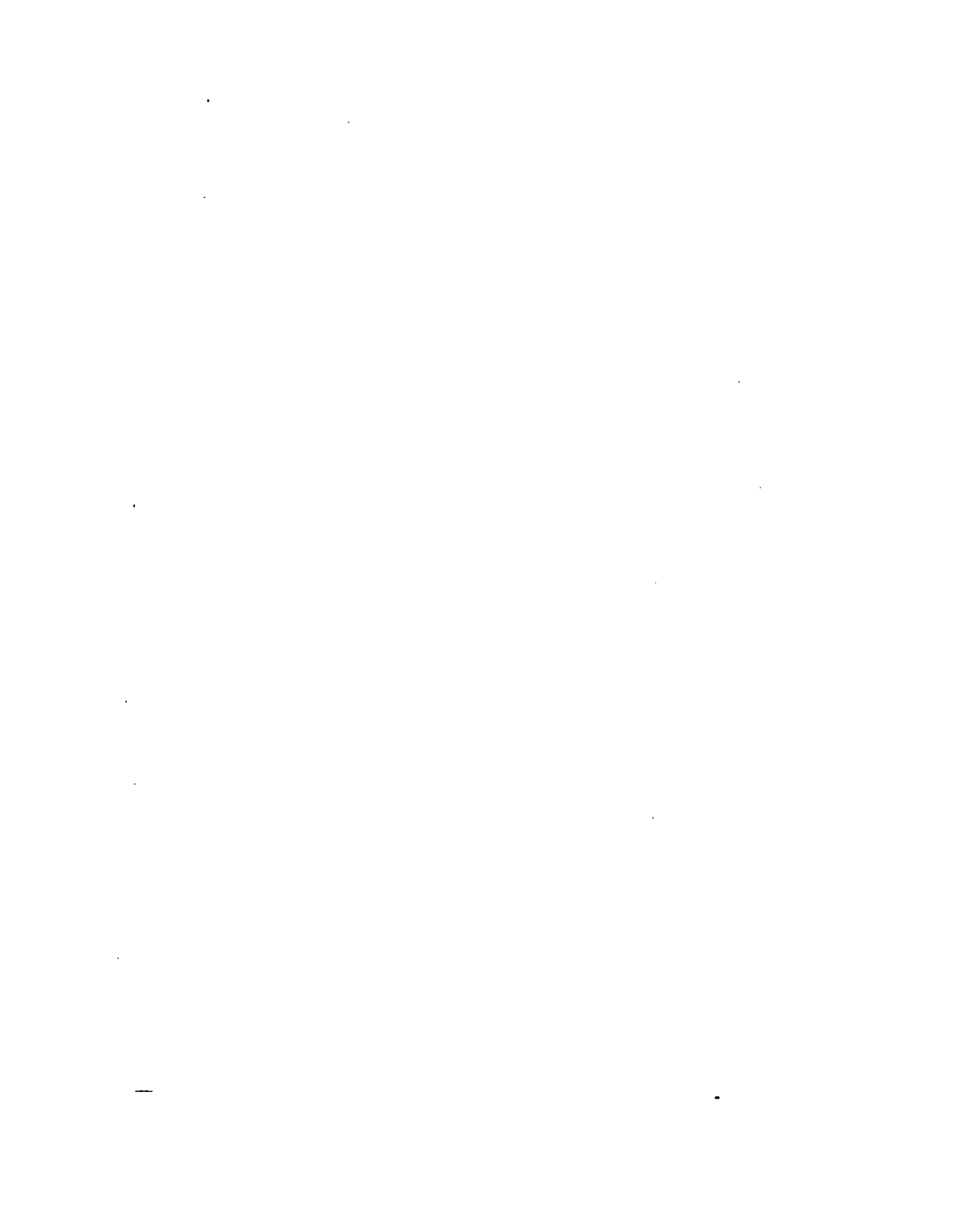




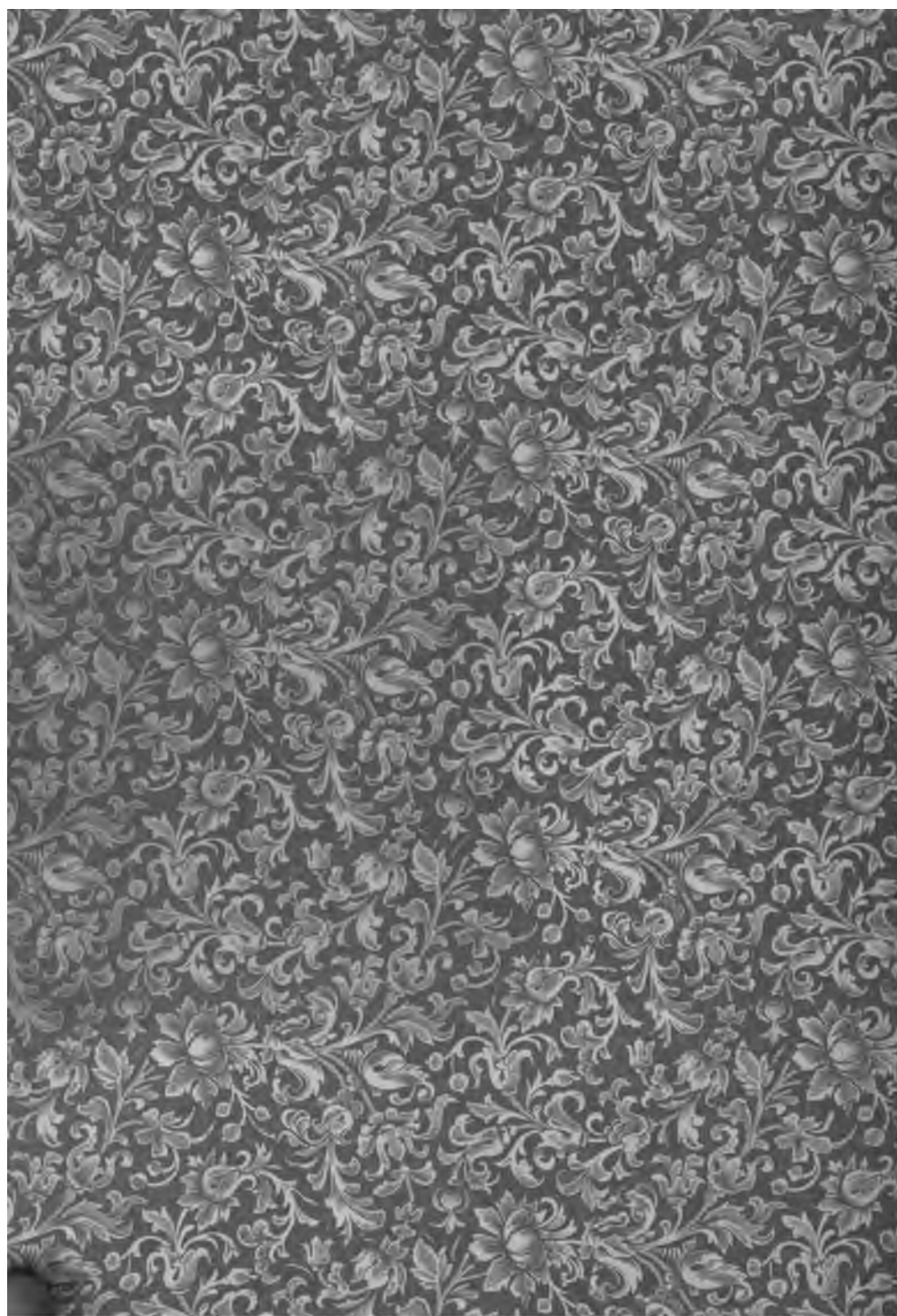


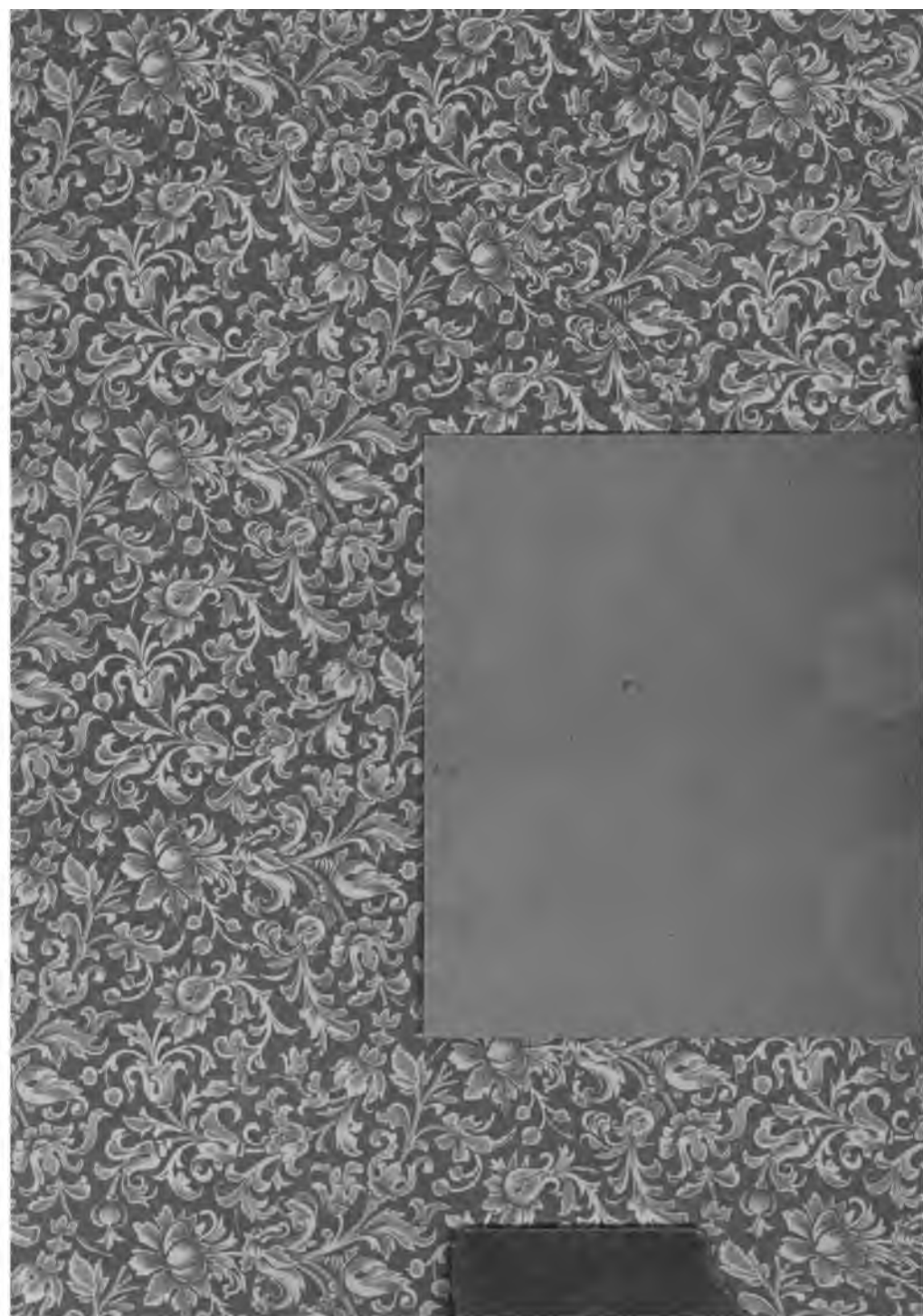














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